The Nation

FOUNDED 1865

Vol. CXXXIII NEW YORK, WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 30, 1931 No. 3456

Contents

EDITORIAL PARAGRAPHS 319
EDITORIALS:
The Austrian Triumph 321
Is Mr. Hoover Inevitable? 322
Stabilizing Business 323
The Power of Gandhi 323
Skyscrapers 324
SPEAKING OF REVOLUTION. By Hendrik Willem van Loon 325
FREE TRADE—ITS MORAL ADVANTAGES. By Oswald Garrison Villard 326
THE BLUNDERING BRITISH BUDGET. By J. A. Hobson 328
THE TWILIGHT OF FREE WILL. By J. B. S. Haldane 329
MR. HOOVER'S CREDO. By Andrew M. Fairfield 330
HOPE FOR PORTO RICO. By Ernest Gruening 332
A DIFFERENT VIEW. By Theodore Schroeder 334
IN THE DRIFTWAY. By the Drifter 335
CORRESPONDENCE 335
CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS ISSUE 335
BOOKS, FILMS, DRAMA:
Snake. By Jessie Lemont 336
A Serene Radical. By Henry Hazlitt 336
America's Two Cultures. By Ferner Nuhn 337
The Power of Pleasing. By Dorothy Van Doren 337
Middle-Class Tragedy. By Horace Gregory 338
Toward Classicism. By Eda Lou Walton 339
Books in Brief 340
Films: Pictures from Plays. By Henry Hazlitt 343
Drama: In Defense of Mae West. By Joseph Wood Krutch 344
Finance: Needless Fears About Bonds. By S. Palmer Harman 346

OSWALD GARRISON VILLARD, Editor

Associate Editors

DOROTHY VAN DOREN MAURITZ A. HALLGREN

Dramatic Editor JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

Literary Editor HENRY HAZLITT

Contributing Editors

HEYWOOD BROUN FREDA KIRCHWEY MARK VAN DOREN
LEWIS S. GANNETT H. L. MENCKEN CARL VAN DOREN
JOHN A. HOBSON NORMAN THOMAS ARTHUR WARNER

DAVID BOEHM, Advertising Manager

Subscription Rates: Five dollars per annum postpaid in the United States and Mexico; to Canada, $6.50; and to foreign countries of the Postal Union, $6.00.

THE NATION, No. 20 Vesey Street, New York City, Cable Address: Nation, New York. British Agent of Subscriptions and Advertising, Miss Gertrude M. Cross, 23 Brunswick Square, London, W. C. 1, England.

THE FINAL SUSPENSION of gold payments has revealed at last the immense gravity of the crisis that Great Britain has been facing. Since the middle of July funds to the astonishing total of $1,000,000,000 have been withdrawn from the London market. With a credit of $250,000,000 from New York and Paris exhausted, and with a further credit of $400,000,000 on the point of exhaustion, the Bank of England and the British Government felt that only by suspending gold payments could the remaining slim gold reserve of the bank be protected. The decision is one of the utmost seriousness. Its first effect must be another shaking of world confidence, already at an extremely low point; for London, even though it had already lost much of its power and prestige to New York, has been traditionally the world's financial center. The blow to British credit will of course be a heavy one. England has been forced temporarily to suspend free gold payments several times in the past, but only in war time and in two or three of the greatest financial crises of the nineteenth century. While admitting the gravity of the situation, however, certain American bankers, among them J. P. Morgan, are extremely optimistic over the ultimate outcome, and declare that British financing is closer to realities than it has been for years.

IT IS TOO EARLY to predict the consequences of the present decision. Historically the first effect of suspension of gold payments has been immediate depreciation of the currency, reflected first in the foreign-exchange market and later in a rise of internal prices. The extent of this depreciation will depend on the judgment of the markets of the world regarding the length of time that gold payments will be suspended, and on what conditions are likely to prevail after that. If the British expect to return to the former gold value of the pound, they must make confidence doubly sure by accumulating specially heavy gold reserves—possibly through the mobilization and liquidation of foreign securities—by balancing their budget, restoring their export trade, and so on. Otherwise the drain would begin all over again, and at a faster rate than before, as soon as gold payments were resumed. The great issue that will now be raised in England will be that of devaluating the pound. The suspension of specie payments that has already taken place is a declaration of embarrassment; devaluation of the pound would be a declaration of bankruptcy; it would involve a partial repudiation of internal debt. In a sense these phrases are less serious than they sound. Germany, after the war, went through a complete devaluation of its currency, an almost complete repudiation and bankruptcy; France, now so strong financially, virtually repudiated four-fifths of its internal obligations when it stabilized the franc at one-fifth of its former value. Great Britain alone, of all the great warring European nations, fought its way back from a pound depreciated to $3.20 to the old par value of $4.86, but it paid a tragic price in the fall of prices over a period of years and in the enormous war debt it was forced to carry. If the British should now decide, after all this, to devaluate their currency from 10 to 25 per cent, the result would be a rise of a corresponding amount in internal prices, which would considerably ease the industrial crisis, and a corresponding fall in the internal debt, which would reduce the immense burden of taxation.

PRESIDENT HOOVER showed courage and leadership in hastily going to Detroit to appeal to the American Legion to abandon its proposal for an additional $2,000,000,000 of bonus payments. True, Mr. Hoover did not mention this particular legislation, but he did make a straightforward request that the veterans join all other classes in the nation in preventing at this time additional financial burdens on the government from any quarter whatsoever. While we cannot concede that the President is wholly correct in saying "our economic strength is such that we would have recovered long since but for these forces from abroad"—meaning "the fundamental dislocations of economic and political forces caused by the Great war"—he is right in asking that only the most essential appropriations should be made this year for the carrying on of the necessary services, and for construction of public works which shall help to diminish unemployment. He did not, of course, fail to make his plea for the rich, declaring that "the rich can be taxed to the point of diminishing returns

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and still the deficit in our ordinary and necessary expenditure would not be covered even on the basis of utmost economy." Considering the difference between the taxes paid in Germany and England today and those paid by the rich in the United States, Mr. Hoover might well have shaded this statement, if he could not admit that we still have great sources of taxation untouched. But waiving all that, it was fine of him to meet the Legion face to face and challenge it upon the question of this new raid upon the Treasury.

THE mystery of the role the American bankers played in the resignation of the Labor Government in England deepens if anything. From the best possible source we are informed that the American bankers made no suggestion whatever as to any cuts of any kind. They received a cable that their aid was needed and that the budget would be balanced. Would they help? The reply, we hear, was that they would. Later they were told that certain specific cuts would be made; were they satisfactory? They declined, with complete correctness, to express any opinion. We have no hesitation in accepting this statement as acquitting American private bankers of bringing any pressure whatsoever for a cut of the dole. It does not, however, take care of the statement printed in the London *Daily Herald* for August 25—a statement that has never been withdrawn or qualified in any way—which declared:

> The late Government was informed by the Federal Reserve Bank that such credits would only be granted provided that specific and considerable economies were at once made in the administration or in the actual benefits paid under the unemployment-insurance scheme.

Nor does it eliminate the positive declarations by such high and responsible British officials as Dr. Christopher Addison, Minister of Education in the Labor Cabinet, and F. W. Pethick-Lawrence, Parliamentary Secretary to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, that "foreign bankers" *did* bring pressure to bear. These questions then present themselves: Was the British Cabinet misinformed? Was the position of the American bankers misrepresented somewhere along the line between Wall Street, the London "City," and 10 Downing Street? Both Mr. MacDonald and Chancellor Snowden have denied any banking pressure. On this side Thomas W. Lamont declared, in announcing the credit, that there was no pressure from here. Yet the belief persists. What is the answer? Meanwhile we take this opportunity to add that leading American bankers deny that it was Bank of France pressure which ended the effort to grant long-term credits to Germany on this side as stated—on other high authority—in our issue of August 12. An editor has a hard time of it these days!

ASTOUNDING, indeed, is the mutiny of the British Atlantic fleet against the pay cuts proposed by the National Cabinet in its effort to balance the budget. When one considers the historic spirit of the English navy, when one remembers how the men of this same fleet endured the terrible strain of the war days when they lay at anchor in heartbreaking monotony, coupled with the ever present danger of a sudden attack, the spectacle of hundreds of sailors going ashore to cheer and dance and defy the orders of their admiral to hoist anchor and sail makes one begin to feel indeed that the British Empire is slipping. Against that unfair budget we trust others will revolt, notably the school teachers, who have already registered their protest, and the destitute unemployed. As long as there are other resources to call upon, it is surely wrong to drive these groups nearer to despair. What could be more moving than the assertion of the mutineers that the proposed cuts in their pay "are a forerunner of tragedy, misery, and immorality among the families of the lower deck"; or the explanation of the men that "if these cuts go through there will be only one pound a week left to maintain the family after the rent is paid." We are all for mutinies like this one, scandalous as that may seem to our army and navy brethren. The quicker fleets and armies find they can strike through passive resistance, as the German fleet did in 1918, the quicker will those instruments of war lose their value in governmental eyes.

MORE AND MORE the White House flounders in its relationship with the press, until now we have had a deliberate attempt on the part of one of Mr. Hoover's secretaries, Theodore G. Joslin, to establish a complete censorship on all news relating to the business depression and to any measures which may be taken by the government to deal with the situation. This censorship proposal grew out of the conference held at the White House on September 14 with the bankers who compose the Federal Reserve Board's Advisory Council. The President refused to disclose what had been discussed, but the bankers freely informed the press that some had urged the President to extend at once a moratorium on debts while others favored legalizing 3 per cent beer to obtain additional revenue. Apparently the White House was furious over these disclosures and when a subsequent dispatch appeared in the New York *Herald Tribune* which disclosed that they had also discussed the $4,000,000,000 of assets frozen in bank and real-estate projects, Mr. Joslin demanded that all such stories be submitted in advance of publication to the White House. This created such a stir among the correspondents that a large group assembled and demanded that Mr. Joslin make further explanations. He then declared that "censorship had not entered my mind"; his desire being merely that he be consulted with a view to establishing "exact facts." The matter will fortunately not stop there. One hundred and fifty correspondents have signed a petition to the National Press Club asking for the appointment of a committee to study the situation and devise effective means of fighting what the *Editor and Publisher* calls the "evasion, misrepresentation, and downright lying of public officials," which is in fact effecting a censorship of government news.

THAT Germany achieved an excess of exports over imports in August of $87,000,000—a higher excess than in any month since the war—is on the surface a highly encouraging sign, but too much importance could easily be attached to it. A large export excess is indispensable not only if Germany is to make any further reparation payments, but even if she is to meet the interest requirements on her huge borrowings—both governmental and private—abroad, or protect herself against another drain of funds when the present bankers' agreement to "freeze" short-term credits expires in February. The August export surplus cannot be expected to reflect a permanent change: it was achieved, not by greater exports—which, indeed, were smaller than in

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

July—but by the measures Germany has taken to limit imports. It is to be noted that only 13 per cent of the decline in imports was in finished goods, while the bulk of the reduction was in raw materials and foodstuffs. Imports of raw materials cannot be permanently smaller if Germany's exports of finished goods are to increase. But the foreign-trade figures for August are none the less a tribute to the heroic efforts Germany is making in the present crisis.

HENRY SLOANE COFFIN, S. Parkes Cadman, Sherwood Eddy, Harry Emerson Fosdick, John Haynes Holmes, Kirby Page, and Stephen S. Wise are among the assorted signers of a resolution just addressed to the President of the United States. The resolution has reference to the recent decision of the United States Supreme Court refusing citizenship to Marie Averill Bland and Professor Douglas C. Macintosh because of their refusal to promise to bear arms in time of war; the forty-eight signers declare that they "share the convictions of those who have been denied citizenship." They add:

> Some of the undersigned find it impossible, because of religious and moral scruples, to render any kind of combatant service in time of war. Others share the conviction of one of the persons denied citizenship in the recent Supreme Court decision and cannot promise support to the Government until we have had the opportunity of weighing the moral issues involved in an international struggle.

It is a commendably courageous act to sign one's name to such a frank declaration when there is no immediate occasion for it. But there is no question that such a reservation will be in the minds of many thousands of our citizens in the event of another war. What they will do about it will depend upon their circumstances, their fortitude, and the strength of their convictions. But the fact that such convictions rest in the hearts of so many of our bona fide, native-born citizens makes it all the more preposterous that citizenship should be denied to otherwise highly desirable men and women because of their aversion to war.

A BRAVE, farsighted, and noble citizen, a great college president was David Starr Jordan, whose death in the fulness of years has been reported. The cause of peace in the United States had no more devoted advocate in season and out of season. When the folly and madness of the war lust were upon us in 1916-17, Dr. Jordan faced calumny and abuse with calmness and unfailing courage. He was tried but not found wanting, and unlike the many pre-war pacifists of the type of Nicholas Murray Butler, he refused to compromise or to recede in any way from his position that war was the crime of crimes. Indeed, it is heartening to record that this admirable patriot and great scientist and educator declared in his last utterance that "all war is murder, robbery, trickery, and no nation ever escaped great losses of men, prosperity, and virility. War knows no victor." He was the author of many volumes, seven of which were given to the cause of peace. His autobiography of his well-lived years he called "The Days of a Man." He was one of a great group of college presidents, including such men as Eliot of Harvard, Angell of Michigan, and Van Hise of Wisconsin, who not only advanced education and educational methods, but were inspiring citizens and leaders of public opinion as well.

The Austrian Triumph

THE idea of a republican democracy has won a significant victory in Austria. This country, while it lost all its wealth and strength by the peace treaties, still is the geographical center of Europe. Nothing can happen to Austria that will not happen to Germany immediately afterwards. Those two countries, notwithstanding their enforced separation, are really one in spirit. If the Heimwehr *Putsch* had succeeded in Austria, Hitler, who is an Austrian, might easily have won his game in Germany. Prince Starhemberg, the leader of the Austrian Heimwehr, is a Hitlerite. In his person the German Nazi movement is somewhat illogically connected with Dr. Ignaz Seipel, the great clerical schemer, who is trying hard to effect the restoration of the Hapsburg monarchy and the reunion of Austria and Hungary—which, of course, would mean an end of the Austrian-German *Anschluss* hopes. The rank and file of the illegal Heimwehr army is composed both of clerical Alpine peasants and of a radical and dissatisfied intelligentsia that will favor any movement as long as it promises to change the unbearable conditions of the most unhappy country in the world.

The general staff of the Heimwehr, on the other hand, consists of dispossessed aristocrats, of the generals and politicians of the ancient regime, who were beaten in the war and conquered but not destroyed in the peaceful revolution of 1918. This army has been trained, armed, and paid in preparation for civil war by Austrian capitalists, the remaining nobility, and by certain foreign Powers. It was ready to fight two years ago, when Starhemberg was Minister of the Interior, and it would have done so, had not Mussolini and Bethlen at the very last moment discontinued their support.

Since then the Austrian banks have collapsed and are no longer able to pay the Heimwehr; it had to strike now or disband. Dr. Pfriemer and Prince Starhemberg chose to move because they trusted in the help of the right wing of the ruling Christian Socialist Party. In fact most of the actual Cabinet ministers and provincial governors of Austria are, or have been, Heimwehr men. The governor of Styria, Dr. Rintelen, at least must have been aware of the coming *Putsch*. Nevertheless the movement collapsed ridiculously, because public opinion in Austria is sober and moderate, and because the Austrian industrial working class has been trained by the Socialist Party to maintain discipline and to remain calm under any provocation. The Republican Schutzbund organization at once mobilized quite as efficiently as the Heimwehr, and certainly would have fought had not the authorities after all moved to suppress the uprising, and had not the troops remained loyal.

The wonder of wonders is that so little blood was shed. The really miraculous political sense of the Austrian population has been vindicated once more, as in 1918, when Socialist Vienna resisted the bolshevik wave when it had overrun both Hungary and Bavaria. The Seipels and Starhembergs, the remnants of a regime that was responsible for the World War, have succeeded in proving the astonishing fact that unfortunate Austria has become, despite all her troubles and tribulations, a real republic.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Is Mr. Hoover Inevitable?

SOME readers have questioned our brief note last week on Senator Borah's chances for the Presidential nomination against President Hoover. They hold it to be an idle dream. What we said was that if Mr. Borah would choose and stick to his furrow with courage and speak his mind with the persuasive oratory for which he is famous, "he could head off the latter's [Mr. Hoover's] renomination." We see, on reflection, no need to change these words. There was a large "if" in them, for, as we also wrote, Mr. Borah is unstable and by no means always firm of purpose. But what we really had in mind was this: If Mr. Borah were to announce that he would rise in the Republican convention to oppose Mr. Hoover's renomination and that he would convict the President out of his own mouth of miscalculation, misinterpretation, and mishandling of the economic situation, he would arouse such a revolt as to head off the renomination.

There are thousands upon thousands of Republican leaders and high party workers who do not wish to vote for Mr. Hoover, who realize that his renomination spells almost inevitable defeat for their party, as he is obviously the most unpopular President since the Civil War. Unfortunately, they are today of the frame of mind which makes them sit back and declare that there is nothing to be done about it; that a President can always renominate himself; and that it is perhaps just as well that he should defend his record since nobody else could or would in sincerity defend it. They point out, too, that it is the Old Guard of federal office-holders which will dominate the convention, as in the past, and that self-interest always rules them, and the fear of the loss of the jobs they now hold.

Now while all this is true, it stands to reason that if Mr. Borah, or anyone else of sufficient stature, were to raise the standard of revolt there would be plenty to repair to it, provided they were assured that the real rebel meant business. Iowa, for example, is reported to be bitterly opposed to Mr. Hoover, and to be on the point of focusing upon Judge W. S. Kenyon, an able judge, formerly Senator from that State. If some of the men who say privately that they will never, never vote again for Mr. Hoover were to come out publicly to this effect and to approve the candidacy of Mr. Borah or Judge Kenyon or someone else, we are sure it would be astonishing how rapidly the rebellion would grow. It is cowardice that rules now, letting "'I dare not' wait upon 'I would.'" Men are afraid to take the first step lest they make themselves ridiculous, or place themselves in a situation where, if Mr. Hoover should by a miracle be reelected, they would find themselves without influence and outside the party ramparts. But these are precisely the men who would take their courage in both hands if they were given a lead; who, if they felt there would be sufficient others to join them, would be willing to take the first perilous plunge.

We admit, of course, the power of the office-holders in the party convention; that is one of the grave faults of our political organization—that the President, wielding a power which he should never have, can force his own renomination. But the control of these very office-holders in the convention may conceivably be used against Mr. Hoover, especially if one man like Senator Borah will stand up and tell the truth about Mr. Hoover and his record. These office-holders are the very ones who do not wish to lose their jobs. They will be hard to hold in line if times are still bad when the convention, dispirited and downhearted, comes together to go through the empty forms of praising a man whom nobody likes, and renominating one who everybody knows has not measured up to the highest office in the land, and is moreover without the slightest chance of reelection. That psychology of impending defeat may become so strong by the middle of next May as to lead the delegates suddenly to wake up, look each other in the face, and say, why must we do this foolish and hopeless thing?

We further base our belief that the renomination of Mr. Hoover can be headed off on the obvious fact that he will be without a great part of his former newspaper support. The Scripps-Howard newspapers, the largest group under one ownership in the country, will certainly fight Mr. Hoover this time, and so probably will Mr. Hearst's papers, while many important newspapers, like the Curtis publications, the New York *Sun*, the Chicago *Tribune*, and many others, give plenty of evidence in their frequent unfavorable criticism of the Hoover Administration that they would rejoice if they could break away from him altogether. The special importance of all this is that Mr. Hoover is not a fighter. Anyone who takes the trouble to look through the files of *The Nation* or of any daily newspaper will find innumerable instances of his having run away under fire. We think that Mr. Hoover would be profoundly affected by the news that William E. Borah proposed to stand up in the convention and denounce him, and that the New York State delegation, which largely opposed his nomination in 1928, and the delegations from Iowa, Wisconsin, and other States were proposing to tell the convention just what they thought of his mismanagement of our affairs. Wisconsin, of course—that brave delegation—will speak out this year, if nobody else does. It has, thanks to the La Follette family, said its unfettered say in every convention since the turn of the century.

For us of *The Nation* this is only a spectacle; we are onlookers; we shall support nobody whom the Republican convention nominates, nor the Democratic either. But barring an at present inconceivable popular uprising, the nominee of one of these conventions will be the next President. We should be less than human if we did not desire to see the old parties show some sense and intelligence, for the coming five years are going to be crucial in the life of the American democracy. There must be radical changes; the economic system must be made over; the Constitution must be revised, the State governments remodeled and rid of partisan politics. Nothing worse could happen than having Mr. Hoover in the White House during all of this period—unless, like the Communists, one favors having the least satisfactory and reliable man in the White House in the hope that he will quickly precipitate a terrific smash.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Stabilizing Business

FOR several reasons the plan proposed by Gerard Swope, president of the General Electric Company, for "stabilization of industry" deserves very serious consideration. It is at once the most comprehensive, the most far-reaching, and the most detailed plan—one might almost be justified in calling it the only real plan—so far put forward by any responsible "captain of industry." It is not only Mr. Swope's plan, or the plan of the General Electric Company; Owen D. Young has asserted that all the leading concerns in the electrical manufacturing industry have indicated their willingness to put it into effect provided they can secure public and legal approval. The plan shows a consideration of the interests of labor rare in the statements of industrial leaders. It sets forth detailed proposals for workmen's compensation, life and disability insurance, pension systems, and unemployment insurance. It provides specifically for the representation of labor at least in the administration of the funds for these various insurance proposals, and it hints—though more vaguely—that labor should be given a voice in the management of industry itself. It proposes that all industrial and commercial companies with fifty or more employees, and doing an interstate business, shall form trade associations for the purpose of "coordinating" production and consumption, and for "the stabilization of prices," and it recognizes at least in part the necessary consequences of this when it suggests that these trade associations be "supervised" in the public interest either by the Federal Trade Commission or by some federal supervisory body specially constituted.

Many other business leaders will doubtless regard the Swope plan as radical. It is, on the contrary, essentially conservative; it is a recognition by one of our most intelligent industrialists that the capitalist system is now on trial and seriously threatened; it is an attempt to preserve that system by a drastic reorganization of it. While recognizing the many undoubted merits of the plan, we cannot be blind either to the great difficulties that stand in its way or to its limits even if it were realized. To permit these proposed trade associations to function in the manner outlined would require the repeal of the anti-trust acts; to make membership in such associations compulsory, and to carry out certain other provisions, would call for revision of our federal Constitution. Certain changes, it is true, might be instituted with little difficulty: for example, those calling for uniform systems of accounting, more frequent publication of accounts, and exchange and publication of information on production and consumption; and many individual companies could inaugurate one or two of the various workmen's insurance plans suggested without cooperation from other concerns.

But the most important problems would still remain to be solved. From the standpoint of the workers, the various pension, disability, and unemployment schemes outlined would of course be a very real advance over present conditions; they would constitute a recognition of industry's responsibility, and something is always better than nothing. But there are grave questions whether, under the proposals outlined by Mr. Swope, the lowest-paid workers would not be saddled with too heavy a share of the burden of premium payments; whether the amount of insurance provided—particularly for unemployment—would be adequate; and whether the weaker industries, unaided by the government, would be able to carry such insurance at all.

From the standpoint of the public, there are still graver questions. Mr. Swope speaks of the "coordination of production and consumption," which necessarily implies at times the limitation of production, and he also speaks of price "stabilization." Who is to determine when production will be limited, and by just what amount, and in just what ratios among individual companies? In whose interests are prices to be "stabilized"? At what levels? By what principles? Mr. Young recognizes that the companies that participate in the Swope plan must surrender at least a part of their present individual freedom and initiative. He speaks of "the surrender of the individual units . . . to be made to the organized group," that is to say, to the trade organizations; but he does not dwell on the more important surrender of the trade organizations to federal control. Just how much control would the organizations be willing to see? As much as that which the Interstate Commerce Commission exercises over the railroads—which implies both a fixing of the price of the product and a definite limitation of capital return? These are some of the questions which the sponsors of Mr. Swope's plan will have to confront before any further steps can be taken.

The Power of Gandhi

WHEN before has the world seen a spectacle comparable to Mahatma Gandhi in St. James's Palace? Here is one naked little man, physically a ridiculous figure, negotiating with the British Empire. There are two parties to the Round Table—the Empire and Gandhi. The one is fortified by tradition of conquest, by caste, by oppression, by greed, by fear that the change which impends will mean its own destruction, and, let it also be said, by the honest belief, held by great multitudes of Englishmen, that any change will spell only misery, anarchy, and chaos for India. On the other hand is Mr. Gandhi, with his vacuum bottle of goat's milk in one hand and his picnic basket of dates and dried corn in the other, exemplifying, in his insignificant person and with his slow, calm English voice, the majesty of an idea. It is the doctrine of nonviolent resistance which is giving him his power, which speaks through him, and which, in the last resort, if it is consistently adhered to, is certain to bring him victory.

There was, among Indian delegates as well as British, evidently not a little apprehension over what the Mahatma would say in his first address to the Round Table Conference. But Gandhi was so gentle, so calm, so sweetly reasonable that for the moment fears seem to be laid. Nor is this to say that he departed from his position, announced long ago and many times since, that India must be free.

> If we are intent on complete independence [he said], it is not from any sense of arrogance, not because we want to parade before the universe that we have severed all connection with the British people. On the contrary you will find in that mandate that the congress contemplates a partnership. The congress contemplates a connection with the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

> British people, but that connection must be such as should exist between two absolute peoples. . . . I am here to put forward that claim in the gentlest manner possible, but in the firmest manner possible, with all the strength and energy at my command.

If these words were spoken gently, they were strong words for all that. And Gandhi must be clearly aware of his own strength. As a negotiator he has been criticized both for a too great insistence on irrelevant detail and for failure to demand, from the Moslems and from his own adherents, a clear statement of policy with which to proceed. In the present case he is evidently determined that general principles must be settled first and details afterward. Thus he was described as sitting by in evident boredom while interminable discussions were held concerning the means of electing delegates to the new India congress. In his own speech he said:

> There was a time when I was proud of being called a British subject. Now I would far rather be called a rebel than a subject. But I have aspired and still aspire to be a citizen, not in the Empire but in a commonwealth—a partnership, if God wills it, indissoluble, but not a partnership imposed by one nation on another.

He comes back each time to the main issue. India must be a nation, in a society of nations of which England also is one, and only one. He says it softly, slowly, gently. But behind him there are millions of his countrymen for whom he is the one voice, the one word; and behind all of them there is the idea. In the Round Table Conference of last winter Muhammad Ali, the representative of the Moslems, also voiced the idea when he said: "Nobody wins in a battle. It involves only the will to kill, but all of our 320,000,000 people have the will to die for the birth of India as a free, united nation."

When subjects talk like this to their rulers, one can only pity the rulers. For there is, in the last analysis, no answer that a ruler can make and still be a ruler. And when a subject talks so, he is in fact no longer a subject. Lord Reading last winter declared peremptorily that there was no use in discussing the possibility of India's being received at present on terms of equality with the other dominions. Lord Reading, as Secretary for Foreign Affairs, is negotiating now, at the present conference, and there is no reason to believe that he has changed his views. Even Mr. MacDonald, desiring earnestly to be generous and just, last winter found it necessary also to temporize. India must wait, must learn, must grow to dominion stature before being granted dominion privileges. To this one can only say that Mr. Gandhi can wait also, that he also has not changed his views. And his is infinitely the easier task; for he need only quietly and gently refuse to obey the mandates of the Empire. The Empire must enforce them.

The power of Gandhi's idea is such that it makes specific considerations seem irrelevant. Hindu-Moslem unity will be achieved in time; it failed last winter by only a stroke. A program for India will be worked out. The opposition of Englishmen will eventually disappear, if not at once, then with time also; one hopes, by peaceful means, but if not, then by British force that must prove ineffective against quiet Indian resistance. The Mahatma need only continue to be resolute. Before strength such as his, empires must give way.

Skyscrapers

FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT, the distinguished Chicago architect, who was somewhat unaccountably excluded from the committee designed to plan next year's exposition, has just arrived in New York for a series of lectures at the New School for Social Research, and signalized his arrival by a broadside attack on the skyscraper. Denouncing its builders as men who abused their commercial privileges by robbing the citizen of his right to a simple life, he declared that Radio City would probably be the last atrocity committed upon a people already about to revolt, and that the American architecture of the future would be one tending to promote "a simplicity, an ease of living" in keeping with "what American life should be." In an interview appearing in the New York *Herald Tribune* he added:

> All our modern inventions and that amazing thing, the machine, have taken away from the city the excuse for its being. We don't need it any more. The city is centralization to the *n*th degree, and the skyscraper is its peak. The centralization ideal died when democracy was born. . . . How long we must wait for the funeral, that is a question of time. However, we have started toward a new integration—to an integration along the horizontal line which we call the great highway.

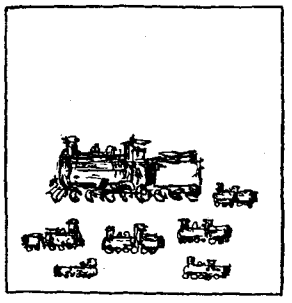
With certain of Mr. Wright's strictures we are naturally in sympathy. New York is too crowded and it is constantly getting more so. Nor is there any doubt that the apostle of decentralization scores a telling point when he insists that the machine which makes the modern city possible could also, if our means of transportation were used to that end, make this same city unnecessary. Undoubtedly, that is to say, the modern metropolis is not so completely the inevitable result of the logic of circumstances as some would have us believe. We boast that we have annihilated distance, yet we crowd everything closer together than we did in the days when a mile meant ten or fifteen minutes instead of one. The city is the result less of modern necessities than of modern preference.

But we are not so sure that the skyscraper is either false or ugly. Sometimes we think it the most impressive style which the twentieth century has developed. When one sees New York from the river in the early morning one is inclined to think that the single touch of fire contributed by a wandering sunbeam to the mooring mast on the Empire State Building justifies even that much-abused and purely rhetorical ornament. Perhaps the skyscraper is not wholly utilitarian, not wholly logical, and, from the standpoint of architectural metaphysics, not wholly "true." But were the great buildings of the past always so completely all these things as theorists would have us believe? Were not even the cathedrals extravagant, fantastic, and a little insane? Were they not built less for use than in order that the proud citizen might show what his community could do, and may not we be permitted to fling our towers into the sky with the same wanton exuberance? If the Woolworth Building was built, in part at least, in order that natives might have something to point out to visiting strangers, so for that matter was the cathedral at Chartres.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Speaking of Revolution . . .

By HENDRIK WILLEM VAN LOON



THE Middle Ages had an expression, "Qui mange Pape en meurt." And believe me, the Middle Ages were right. Whatever you do, don't start a quarrel with the church. Never under any circumstances allow yourself to be drawn into a fight with the church, for you will die of it. Once upon a time, when I was still very young, I got myself mixed up in a theological battle. I have seen a great deal of dirty fighting in my day. But motor-boat racing as practiced by some of our compatriots is a clean sport compared to such an encounter. What I am about to say, therefore, should not be construed as an invitation to a debate. But once in a while temptation is too great—I am sorry but here goes.

The Mother Church does not approve of birth control. That is expressing it rather mildly. No church approves of birth control, but the Mother Church happens to be a little more violent upon the subject than most of her children. And that reminds me. Why does not some enterprising and courageous publisher give us a good modern translation of all papal bulls and encyclicals? These interesting divine pronunciamientos come to us only in the form of half-sentences or three or four words of the half of one sentence. And I grant you that those two or three words as a rule sound very imposing. There is something solemn and otherworldly about them. But a correct translation of these documents would be a wow. For the Head of the Church rarely minces his words. A spade within the confines of the Vatican City is a spade and a mighty spade at that. A pernicious, dastardly, accursed, and damnable heretic is just that and nothing else. The Latin originals, done neatly and deftly into the American vernacular, would be a magnificent contribution to the current literature of billingsgate. Perhaps you do not believe me. Then, I pray you, get out the old Latin dictionary and have a try. But do not let the manuscript lie around where the kiddies might get hold of it. For you will be surprised, and so would they, could they lay hands on Papa's translation.

All that, however, is neither here nor there. I was talking about birth control. I have just finished the latest contribution upon the subject from the hands of a learned Man in Holy Orders. The "Nihil Obstat" and the "Imprimatur" proclaim the pontifical O. K. I have most carefully followed the line of reasoning, and I must confess that from a purely materialistic point of view I can find nothing to criticize. The economic argument is ingenious, to say the least. Twenty people can buy more goods than ten and a hundred can buy more than twenty. Therefore let us have a hundred people and all grow rich. Q. E. D., and very plausible as far as it goes.

But a question arises in my mind. How much do machines buy?

And there is where I agree with my Reverend Friend and Enemy.

Voltaire once got a medal from the Pope. I always had hopes, but here goes my last chance. For what I want to say is this: "Perillustrissimi Gentlemen of the Revealed Law, I fully agree with your general point of view, but let us get together upon this one point. If we are to do without birth control for people then we must have birth control for machines, and if we are to do without birth control for machines then we must have birth control for people. We cannot have our cake and eat it. We cannot survive in a world in which both flivvers and infants multiply ad lib."

I am of course familiar with the graphs submitted to us by the anti-birth-controllers, who show us by means of their Babsonian hocus-pocus that the world has vastly increased in wealth while at the same time increasing in numbers. But these graphs have failed to convince me.. For "people" are not just "people." Does anyone remember the investigation made some thirty years ago by a commission of British sociologists in the slums of London? The wit of the committee came to the regretful conclusion that about 80 per cent of London's tenement population was conceived in "original gin." (Proofreader! please do not change to "sin." Even if this is *The Nation* our 1,458,398 readers will enjoy it. Thank you.) And that sort of progeny is not apt to get its just share of that pleasant graph of crescendo riches. On the contrary they will be part of that economic cannon-fodder of which Samuel Butler wrote so eloquently:

> The rain it raineth everywhere,
> Upon the just and unjust fellers.
> But mostly on the just because
> The unjust got the justs' umbrellers.

Mere life, as I see it, has never been a boon to anyone. A reasonably good and decent life is undoubtedly the greatest gift the gods have it within their power to bestow upon us poor mortals. But living for the mere sake of being alive is a pretty dreary adventure. In most instances a downright repulsive experience. I should like to see a world in which the average infant had a chance at something a little more elevated and inspiring than the emotions experienced by a cauliflower or a Brussels sprout.

There is no short-cut to paradise, and the millennium would be as dreary as an ocean voyage with a dozen dry-leaders on board. But a reasonably good and decent life belongs to the possibilities of existence.

Machines have come to stay.

So apparently have babies.

But unless we want them to destroy each other we shall have to make a very definite choice. What do we want: birth control for babies or birth control for machines?

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Free Trade—Its Moral Advantages*

By OSWALD GARRISON VILLARD

THE simplest facts about the evils of the protective tariff system are the hardest to grasp. Few people realize that when a government protects a given industry it goes into partnership with that industry in that it guarantees to that business a profit, on the assumption that its continuance is essential to the safety or welfare of the country. It does not stop to inquire whether the industry to be aided is well or badly managed; whether its inability to compete with foreigners is due to inefficiency of management, to ill-treatment or ineffective use of its labor, to overcapitalization, to lack of modern machinery, or to anything else. The government does not inquire into its bookkeeping methods or the ability of its sales force. It usually says: "You are not doing well? Why, let us help you; we have not forgotten how generously you contributed to our campaign fund last summer. How high a tariff do you wish?"

In this way industries are kept alive and profitable which are crookedly managed or are unable to stand on their own feet because of their own errors of management, while others are helped to greater profits than before. Examples of the latter are many; a particularly striking one is that of the Du Pont Powder Company, which was greatly interested in no less than fourteen paragraphs of the last tariff law, yet their net profits had risen from $12,920,458 in 1922, to $66,653,039 in 1928, while their surplus, carefully invested in bonds, stocks, and real estate, rose from $234,000,000 to $397,000,000. This was plainly not the case of a company dying because of successful foreign competition. More important was the fact that there are no more generous or more powerful backers of the Republican Party than the heads of the Du Pont concerns. It is an amusing fact that men of this type who profit by these governmental favors are the very ones who cry out most loudly that free competition is the life of trade and are most bitterly opposed to the Government's entering private business—save for the purpose of increasing profits. They, like President Hoover, believe that a government's giving cash to a needy individual destroys that man's moral fiber, weakens his character, and robs him of initiative, self-reliance, and self-respect. Yet they are quite certain that governmental grants to what they consider needy corporations have none of these evil effects upon the character, or practices, or initiative, or self-reliance of the several corporate managements.

Let me state here that I belong to that group which considers such legislative grants to corporations as wholly immoral. It seems to us unethical favoritism to single out any one group in the community for such governmental favors, for that procedure makes of the beneficiaries a specially favored class and favoritism of this kind is utterly repugnant to the spirit of true democracy or a sound Republic. Nor is the situation in the least bit changed if other groups, like the farmers, also seek and obtain tariff favors. Ethical values are not affected by numbers. The establishment of any privileged class becomes at once a menace to the whole industrial order by destroying equality before the Government, by creating corruption, by sowing internal dissension. Whenever any line of business, such as the steamship owners or aviation companies, is subsidized by the Government there present themselves other industries to demand some profits, or greater profits. They are justified in so doing. There is no sound reason whatever why, if the Government decides to support or to aid the chemical industry and to insure vast profits to the steel industry, it should not in this hour of the distress of the oil companies come to their rescue with outright cash aid such as it gives to steamship owners under the thinly veiled but false excuse of paying for mail service rendered. If one group of American citizens is entitled to the sheltering wing of the Government, every other business likewise is entitled to it.

It is further immoral and unsocial for the Government to guarantee profits because it neither limits those profits nor prescribes the share of labor in them. It does not say—as it has in the case of the railroads—that 5¾ per cent is a fair rate of profit; it fixes no limits whatever and it is indifferent if the conditions of labor in an industry are grievous beyond description. Nothing is hollower than the sham argument—for which our labor leaders have so stupidly fallen—that a tariff is necessary to keep up the "American standard of living." Take the protected woolen industry. There we find almost every evil of the protective system exemplified. Labor conditions are among the most evil under our flag; there is no pretense that thousands upon thousands of the employees of the American Woolen Company have an "American" living wage—when the average wage is something under $16 a week. Yet the wool and cotton barons have dictated their own tariffs—they expressed themselves as entirely satisfied when the Fordney-McCumber tariff was passed. But it is characteristic of the protective system that the beneficiary is never satisfied for long, never has enough, and constantly calls for readjustments. The American Woolen Company's record is the very antithesis of what a corporation's ought to be. Its late head was worshiped as a great industrial leader. In five years the company paid him $7,865,844, including $2,284,375 for his income taxes—with the aid of the Government. After his death he was charged by the company with having been guilty of swindling—of course the Government in enriching him never inquired whether his industry was or was not decently conducted. Any really civilized government might rather have done its best to wipe out this company, even if it had for a decade to support the employees, rather than to maintain it and to bestow riches upon the managers and stockholders.

Wherever the protective system exists, there we find political corruption, favoritism, the buying and selling of legislation; the Government spying upon its own citizens; falsifying, misrepresentation, bribery. What could be more disgusting than our Government's recent searching of the luggage of Clarence H. Mackay and his wife on a New York pier after they had sworn declarations which proved to

* The fifth of a series of articles on free trade. A delay in the mails necessitates the postponement to our next issue of the article by Dr. Karl Polanyi, of Vienna, on Austria and Free Trade, which will conclude the series. —Editor The Nation.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

be completely correct? The Government's defense is that some loathsome creature in Paris who has been "living comfortably on the 25 per cent paid to informers" (and has, doubtless, had enough left over to buy his tips from the clerks in stores in which Americans make their purchases) sent it a false tip about the Mackays. Thus it admits that it uses stool pigeons to spy abroad upon its own citizens. What a dirty business! And how can a government which indulges in practices like this ever expect to eradicate corruption among its customs officials and inspectors?

Yet this stool-pigeon business is little worse than the stationing in Europe of those American officials who have been demanding the right to inspect the books of all European concerns doing business with America to see what are their costs of production. For how many hours would American exporters permit similar snooping in their offices by French, or German, or English, or Japanese inspectors? Our Government has had to modify this procedure in response to indignant protests. It is, however, characteristic of the utter confusion, and the very bad and overbearing manners the protection policy produces that the Congress and President saw nothing wrong in thus demanding that our business rivals abroad reveal all their business secrets to us under threat of losing our trade. Adam Smith once wrote in the "Wealth of Nations" that the founding of a great empire in India for the sole purpose of raising up a people of customers was "altogether unfit for a nation of shop-keepers, but extremely fit for a nation whose government is influenced by shop-keepers." The protective policy has given us a country controlled by manufacturers; it is a project altogether fit for a nation that has surrendered to its manufacturers, but it is utterly unfit for one which calls itself a democracy; which boasts, as President Hoover so often has said, that all its men and women start the race of life equally from scratch and achieve their positions in that race solely because of their own talents.

I believe that no man has as yet been able to evaluate the evil effects upon our public life of our tariff policy. Nothing to my mind has done more to lower the whole standard of American politics than this buying and selling of protective tariff favors. The repeated publications of the direct connection between tariff favors granted and the large campaign contributions raised every four years by the Republican Party for the purpose of buying the Presidency, speak for themselves. To my mind ex-Senator Grundy, of Pennsylvania, was quite within his rights in going down to Washington after the election of Hoover to demand a tariff wall so high that no article manufactured abroad which was also manufactured in the United States could scale that wall. He said quite frankly that the Pennsylvania Manufacturers' Association, of which he was the head, had raised $700,000 for Mr. Coolidge's election and $547,000 for Mr. Hoover's, and that they wanted value for value paid. But what of the morality of this whole transaction? What part has this sort of thing not played in bringing American laws and American institutions into their present low repute in the eyes of the American people, so many of whom have only one idea in regard to their Government, that of getting what you can out of it while the going is good.

The tariff is further immoral because it taxes the bulk of the people to support a privileged few. It makes every citizen pay tribute to whoever has enough influence to get Congress to interfere with natural trade laws, by the erecting of a tariff dam across the currents of international trade. Secretary Mellon sits in the Cabinet of the United States while every American man or woman who has to buy an aluminum utensil of any kind pays tribute to Mr. Mellon's aluminum trust, which has often had no difficulty whatever in getting its tariff fixed at the precise point the managers of that trust desire. In 1922 Congress raised the aluminum duty for this "great" Secretary of the Treasury from two to five cents per pound, and Mr. Mellon at once kindly raised the price of that metal to every American consumer by just three cents per pound. But he is an honored citizen; a pillar of the Republican Party; a member of the Government. Only a free-trade crank could see in this spectacle the degradation of the Government, an injury to every citizen, on behalf of a man whose annual income is now so huge that he could not possibly spend it unless he gave it away. And as Mr. Mellon has built his great fortune out of tariff favors at the expense of his fellow-citizens (and out of the liquor traffic), so most of our great American fortunes hark back to the tariff. Free trade would at once stop this means of creating the vast fortunes which will inevitably lead to confiscatory inheritance taxes and supertaxes on great fortunes, taxes intended not to raise revenues so much as to control the piling up of wealth by a few. One can best realize the iniquity of this aluminum-trust situation when one thinks what an outcry there would be if Mr. Mellon came to Washington and demanded that, by means of a domestic tariff wall cutting off New York from the Union, he should be given the right to raise the price of aluminum to the people of the State of New York by three cents a pound. He would be locked up as a crazy man. Then why in law or ethics should he be given the privilege of utilizing the artificial national boundaries of our country to mulct every American who uses aluminum? This is nationalism gone wild.

So the coming of free trade would purify more than any other means our whole political life. Besides stopping endless corruption, visible and invisible, it would be a blow at the intense and narrow nationalism which makes for trade rivalries and wars—Richard Cobden also said that peace and free trade were synonymous, one and indivisible. It is hard to see how in this juncture, certainly if the capitalist system is to be saved, it will be possible to put off universal tariff reduction much longer. If England goes in for tariffs it will be a further long step in the direction of international collapse. And nothing could be more ridiculous than Arthur Henderson's proposal of a "temporary 10 per cent tariff." It is a case of the camel's getting his head inside the tent. Create great protected and vested interests and they have you by the throat. You suddenly find that they are your master and not you theirs. That has been the story in Germany and the United States and all other protected countries. There are vested interests enough in Great Britain now. Nobody dares to grapple there with the vested liquor trades, and until quite recently few have dared to oppose the vested interests of the munition-makers and warship builders, plus the power of the Admiralty and the War Office. When the whole world is suffering because trade is no longer free, to have one more country, and free-trade England at that, bar the goods of other nations is enough to make one despair of preventing the economic collapse of the world.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Blundering British Budget

By J. A. HOBSON

London, September 12

THIS has been a strange week in our political history, of which by this time the cables have doubtless given you full details. The storm broke upon Britain with a sudden violence and came near to destroying the life of the pound sterling and plunging the country into commercial and industrial chaos, the end of which is not easily foreseen. Nor would it pay to discuss how far the trouble was attributable to the extravagance of our government coupled with the slump in revenue, and how far to the failure of our banks to keep a sufficiency of liquid resources against emergencies. I would only point out here that whatever else may be said about the wisdom of Mr. MacDonald's action in dissolving his government and framing the national one, nobody who knows him doubts that he was honestly convinced of the vital necessity of the step that he took. He must have been aware that he was jettisoning his own political career and losing the majority of his Labor followers. But it was probably a disappointment that virtually the whole of his party, including his trusted financial advisers, with the single exception of Mr. Snowden, and all the trained economists in the late government—Mr. William Graham, Dr. Dalton, Mr. Pethick-Lawrence, Mr. Lee Smith, and Lord Passfield—refused to indorse the policy of the new government. Might it not have been better for him to have allowed the new government to be in form what it is in substance, a coalition of Conservatives and Liberals, since the Prime Minister has only eleven members of the largest party in the House with him? Labor, standing outside, might then have given its general aid in balancing the budget, though disassociating itself from injurious cuts in the social services. A pledge against the immediate introduction of a protective tariff might have enabled such a government to last until its work was done.

By common consent this emergency government will be short-lived. There is a furious drive on for an early election among Conservatives in and out of the new government, ready to risk further financial peril to get a tariff. Despite the opposition of the City and sober politicians of all parties, the hotheads may have their way. They think they could get a mandate from the electorate if an election could be held before the cuts had time to hurt. As events may show, most serious politicians think it impossible to consider the crisis over as soon as the budget is formally balanced. British credit has been so seriously impaired that it would be foolish to suppose that confidence can be restored before time has shown the efficacy of the new cuts and taxes. Had it been possible to put before the Labor Party in the House and in the country the full Snowden proposals for economy and taxation instead of concentrating attention on the cut in the dole, the situation might have been different. For though the principle of "equality of sacrifice" is destitute of meaning in comparing cuts upon a bare subsistence wage and on the income of a millionaire, the large reduction on high official salaries from the monarchy downwards and the increases of income tax and super tax would have had some effect in abating the passionate resentment which the proposal to economize upon the poorest and most helpless section of the working class aroused.

The budget is balanced if the estimates of cuts and tax yields turn out correct. But will they? The proposals carry certain damaging reactions upon trade and employment that are left out of consideration. The reduction of the dole, and the cuts in incomes throughout the public services, national and local, involve, and are intended to involve, reduced consumption on the part of this large section of our people. This reduced consumption will be reflected in reduced production, and must throw out of employment a large number of workers in our productive and distributive trades. Thus more unemployed will come up on the cut dole, or upon Poor Law allowances, canceling the estimated economy. If, as is expected and hoped by many economists, cuts in the pay of public servants are followed by similar cuts in the general wage level, consumption will be still further reduced and more unemployment will ensue. Under such circumstances both wholesale and retail prices will continue to fall, and the yield of income tax will diminish with reduced or "passed" dividends.

The failure to take account of these perils is, I think, attributable to a too narrow conception of the balance of trade. We are told, and perhaps it is true, that if we were to go on living as we do, we should be confronted next year with a possible deficit in our trade balance of £100,000,000, partly from the shrinkage in visible exports, but mainly by the loss of invisible exports, that is, interest from our foreign securities, and the shipping, banking, and insurance connected with our foreign trade. Behind the gold drain and the budget-balancing lies this even graver menace to our security and prosperity. Unless like spendthrifts we are content to live upon our capital, we must pay for our imports by our exports. Now we can hardly count on any large expansion of our exports, though considerable wage cuts in these industries (already lower-waged than either our sheltered trades or our public services) might help us to secure some larger share of the contracted foreign markets, stimulating an international competition in wage-cutting and tariffs. But failing, as we should, to achieve any large expansion of exports, we must mainly rely on restricting our imports of foods, raw materials, and manufactured goods. How can we do this? By consuming less and so producing less. We can only reduce imports of food by eating less, imports of materials by cutting our expenditure on clothing and on the thousand and one articles into which foreign materials enter. Fully-manufactured goods and luxuries we could keep out by a tariff or an embargo. This policy, whether promoted by a tariff or not, would raise food prices, thus further crippling consumption, and would raise costs of production in most of our industries, inclusive of our export industries. The essential folly of this line of procedure should now be manifest. In the vain attempt to balance our budget and our national trade by reducing consumption (called in heroics "tightening our belts") we cut down production,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

lower prices, increase unemployment, and reduce to futility the whole policy of economies.

Such absurdities arise from a failure to diagnose the disease from which we are suffering, and to apply the appropriate remedy. The visible malady of a productive power in agriculture, manufacture, transport, commerce, that is able to turn out goods faster than they can be bought and consumed can only be cured by monetary and other economic reforms which expand the consuming power of the low-standard classes and peoples of the world, enabling them to raise consumption so as to keep pace with the accelerating powers of production. Such a budget as that of Mr. Snowden is the precise antithesis of such a remedy. It seeks to contract consumption instead of expanding it, and will increase the waste of idle capital and labor instead of absorbing them. The Labor Opposition resistance to wage and dole cuts that reduce the standard of life of the workers is based on sound economic instinct.

The Twilight of Free Will

By J. B. S. HALDANE

NINETEENTH-century science took determinism for granted. Events were thought to be inexorably linked by causal laws, so that if we knew the state of the universe at any moment it could be predicted for the rest of eternity. Furthermore, many believed that the movements of material objects (including human bodies) were determined by purely material causes, so that a sufficiently extended physics would enable us to foretell at least all such events as are accessible to the historian in the past.

This confidence has lately been shaken for several reasons. The law of causation has been called in question, and the physical world has turned out to be unexpectedly complex. Above all, Heisenberg's principle of indeterminacy, which in one form or another is accepted by most physicists, states that the very nature of things imposes a definite limit to the accuracy of our observation, so that we can never say what will happen, but only what is the probability that a certain event will happen within a given time. Writers who are frankly hostile to science, and also certain eminent mathematicians who approach science from the point of view of the theorist rather than the experimenter, have announced this principle as a breach in the armor of science which might allow the ingress of indeterminism in the philosophical sense. The experimental physicist has been less perturbed. It has long been known that no microscope could show up a body much smaller than a wave-length of light. Matter is now found to share certain properties with radiation. In consequence similar limitations apply to all kinds of measurement.

All scientific laws are approximate. At one time it was thought that when two substances combined chemically their mass was quite unaltered. We now think it likely that in general it diminishes very slightly, but that the loss of mass is far too small to detect by any known means. The chemist therefore does not trouble about the change. So with human affairs. Science can never prove a complete negative. It can only show that some phenomenon, if it occurs, is on such a small scale as to elude observation and to be of no practical importance.

The question to be answered with regard to the human will is as follows. Can we give a nearly complete account of human behavior in terms of known causes, such as heredity and environment, or is there a definite residue left over which cannot be accounted for by such means? The strongest supporters of free will admit a certain influence of environment. Evil communications corrupt good morals, and conversely. But they would claim that a large proportion of human actions, especially moral decisions, cannot be so explained, and are due to the free action of the soul. If this were the case scientific interpretation would, at a certain point, come up against a "brick wall." Otherwise, although the explanation would never be complete, the unexplained residue could be reduced indefinitely.

Now the explicable differences between the behavior of two men are due either to innate differences or to differences of environment. So if we could find two people with the same inborn characters, and put them in the same environment, they ought to behave in just the same way, except in so far as free will supervenes on ordinary causation. Clearly this is an impossible experiment, but we can observe something fairly near to it. There are considerable inborn differences between brothers, or between ordinary twins. One will inherit a certain parental character, say, brown eyes or immunity to diphtheria, the other will not. But so-called "identical" twins are formed from the same fertilized egg, and as Galton first showed, inherit the same characters. If separated in infancy, they may differ considerably, which proves that environment counts for a good deal. But if they are brought up together they resemble one another to an astonishing degree, not only in physique and intellect, but in moral choices, which show up the freedom of the will if this exists.

Lange investigated criminality in twins. Only about one in eight of the adult brothers of criminals commit a crime. So common ancestry and common environment together are not decisive. But in the case of thirteen criminals who had "identical" twin brothers or sisters, ten of their twins had committed similar crimes, and the three exceptions can be explained away on the basis of accidents and war wounds. In this group only about a quarter of the moral decisions which led its members into crime could have been due to anything defying analysis. Three-quarters at least fall within the province of the geneticist, who studies heredity, and the sociologist, who is concerned with environment. Probably the proportion is much greater, and indeterminism, if it is a fact, is of no real importance.

Now the view is sometimes taken that this scientific Calvinism denies the freedom of the will and moral responsibility. I do not agree with this criticism. When we feel ourselves to be acting freely we are merely experiencing causation from inside, so to say. I will to move my hand and it moves. This is a free action because both will and

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

motion are parts of my life. If I am handcuffed and action does not follow willing I am not free. If my hand moves without my will in an epileptic fit I am not free, nor responsible for what it may do.

To say that my actions are determined means that I have a perfectly definite character. Unless this is true, responsibility is a meaningless word. The new knowledge does not deny responsibility, but opens up the road to a scientific study of character and its formation. It is doubtless opposed to the retributive theory of punishment, according to which the world is better if a wrongdoer suffers; in other words, two blacks make a white. But it does not deny that punishment may be desirable as a deterrent or a reformative. Yet it suggests that in future character may be controlled through heredity and environment rather than through a penal system.

Materialists may claim that the results so far obtained from the analysis of the causes of human diversity support their views. Character, they will say, is determined by the environment, which can be specified in physical terms, and by inherited qualities, which have also been shown to have a definite material basis. But results of this character, though compatible with materialism, do not constitute an argument for it. If the differences between individuals are physically determined, it does not follow that their likenesses, and in particular their consciousness and will, are determined in the same way. The facts are equally explicable on the basis of absolute idealism, that high and difficult philosophy of which Samkara Acharya and F. H. Bradley are the exponents best known to citizens of the British Empire. The ultimate reality may be mind, and yet the distinction between finite minds may be determined by the less real appearances which we have been accustomed to call matter.

Of the various religious theories of the soul, that least compatible with the above view is the Hindu theory that it has had a long previous history, a theory which has engendered the most unpleasant of all forms of snobbery, the belief that one's present good fortune is the reward of virtue in former lives. But whatever its religious bearings, the scientific study of human diversity is making its definite start. It is too early to say whether its main practical effects will be to foster social reform or eugenics. But there can be no question that it will profoundly affect human belief and conduct.

Mr. Hoover's Credo

By ANDREW M. FAIRFIELD

THE average American President lays no claim to any *Weltanschauung,* any complete social philosophy. He is merely "a good American." He is a Democrat or a Republican, a standpatter or a political progressive of the Roosevelt type. He is blissfully unaware of the existence of hundreds of solid tomes on the questions of government, economics, political science, the philosophy of democracy and representative institutions.

But Herbert Hoover is not supposed to be an average President. He aspires to membership in a different and truly distinguished group—that of Washington, Jefferson, Lincoln, and Wilson. He is an Engineer, a Statistician, an Economist, an Organizer and Administrator *par excellence.* He is the man for the crisis, because he is not a politician or perpetual candidate, but a statesman of ripe and varied experience and sound profound convictions. He is no shifty opportunist; he has clear ideas and a firm faith in first principles. That this is Mr. Hoover's picture and conception of himself, neither his friends nor his foes, nor impartial bystanders, will deny. Let me, then, test Mr. Hoover in the light of his first principles and his philosophy.

He has not failed to supply us with abundant materials and tools for the proposed test. He has written a little book in defense of individualism, and has repeatedly called himself an individualist and an irreconcilable opponent of socialism, collectivism, communism, and bureaucracy. He has lauded "rugged individualism" and has warned us solemnly against "bureaucracy and domination," and against "too much government in business" and too little business method in government.

Now individualism is a perfectly definite philosophy of government and political organization. There is a school which expounds and defends that philosophy. To that school belong such great thinkers as Herbert Spencer, Wilhelm von Humboldt, Bastiat, Proudhon, William G. Sumner, and Professor Fite. There is not a scintilla of evidence in Mr. Hoover's essays, messages, or speeches that he has ever opened a book of any one of the thinkers just named, or that he knows what individualism is or denotes. Let me tell him then. If he were a consistent, sincere individualist, he would favor and advocate—not necessarily in messages to Congress—free trade, free banking, free competition and free combination, and the repeal of prohibition and all other laws not absolutely and obviously necessary to the maintenance of peace and order. If he were a consistent individualist, he would oppose and denounce all subsidies, bounties, and special privileges.

Nay, more; he would liquidate sundry governmental business enterprises and demand the abolition of many federal departments and bureaus—the Children's Bureau, the Department of Commerce, even the Department of Agriculture. What justification is there, under individualism, for taxes to support armies of government commercial agents, drummers, and salesmen? A laissez faire policy limits the government strictly to police functions. With agriculture, commerce, and education it does not concern itself. All those matters are left entirely to private enterprise and voluntary associations.

Of course, no President of the United States could seriously ask Congress to establish and enthrone individualism by statutory law. But a President who really and intelligently espoused and entertained the doctrines and tenets of individualism would certainly feel morally bound to propose legislative steps *toward* the right objective, not steps *away* from it. Mr. Hoover's individualism is, as William Hard has shown in *The Nation,* a monstrous, misshapen, inde-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

fensible hodge-podge, a thing of shreds and patches. If he is for any measure, it is consonant with his individualism, and if he is opposed to any proposal, it is branded by him as paternalistic, socialistic, un-American. Intellectual integrity and decent self-respect forbid such playing fast and loose with political science.

But, it may be objected, Mr. Hoover is a defender not of abstract and theoretically consistent individualism, but of the practical, reasonable American variety of that creed and system. But is that variety defensible and worthy of respect and honor? American individualism is plutocratic individualism, the individualism of the fortunate few, the interests in possession, the men and women who control the present order and profit by it. The professed individualism of such predatory groups is a sham and a mockery.

Mr. Hoover affects to contemplate America's false and dishonest individualism with pride and ecstatic veneration. His most intelligible—not intelligent—and frankest exposition of and appeal to the principles of that system will be found in the characteristic and revealing address he delivered at King's Mountain in October, 1930. In that carefully prepared piece Mr. Hoover restated his creed and attempted to define and describe the American social and economic system. What, he asked, was that system and what principles informed and governed it? He declared that he found no name or label at all adequate for it. Liberalism? No, that term had been corrupted by political use. Individualism? No, for it did not permit any class or group to override the equal opportunity of other classes and groups. Capitalism? No, for under it capital was a servant, not a master. Democracy? No, for democratic governments and institutions existed elsewhere under ideals which did not embrace equality of opportunity. Mr. Hoover concluded that the American system was—the American system. A very adroit and acceptable conclusion for a politician. But not for an economist, engineer, and statesman. The sincere thinker knows that there is no such thing as an American "system." A little democracy, a good deal of plutocracy and tyranny, a little pseudo-individualism, a little collectivism—that is the American system.

Mr. Hoover admits it is not perfect. We have, he concedes, some problems to grapple with and solve, but, he asserts, they are problems not of decadence and retrogression, but of growth and progress. This would be important if true. Is the rapid growth of farm tenancy a problem of growth and progress? Are thousands of bank failures an evidence of progress? Is chronic unemployment a monument to progress and equal opportunity? Are business cycles, depressions, crises outward signs of inward grace and sweet harmony? Are the racketeers, bootleggers, political crooks, brutal police officers, profiteers, and monopolists children of health and progress? Mr. Hoover shrinks from pretending that the American system is liberal or democratic. Skyscraper tariffs, Chinese and Japanese exclusion laws, deportation drives and raids, drastic restriction of white immigration, anti-evolution statutes, Volsteadism, Mann Acts, federal and local censorships, Comstock laws are not precisely shining exemplifications of liberalism.

As to the democracy, it exists in some States that have been intelligent enough to modernize their constitutions and to adopt the direct primary, the referendum, the initiative, and the recall. The federal government is autocratic, not democratic. It was meant to be autocratic, and has remained so. The Cabinet is responsible to the President alone. The Senate is more powerful and less amenable to public opinion than any hereditary house of peers. Congressmen are elected and ordered to stay at home about thirteen months, the lame ducks being given four months of control after their repudiation by the electorate—and for no reason or rhyme whatever under present conditions. Five members of the federal Supreme Court veto any really progressive legislation they happen to dislike, and as they are apt to be elderly lawyers of reactionary proclivities, they dislike most legislation designed to correct injustice and to translate Pecksniffian phrases into living realities.

Mr. Hoover is of the opinion that the American democracy is vastly superior to the British, French, or German democracies because its social ideal embraces equality of opportunity. What exactly does he mean by "equality of opportunity"? Opportunity to be and do what? Every college graduate can become a bond salesman, at least when times are good and the security markets active, but is that equality of opportunity? What sort of equality and opportunity are enjoyed by the Negroes, by the women and children in the textile mills, by the coal miners, unionized or non-unionized? What are the opportunities of the aged poor, whose name is legion?

America has no political democracy and never had it, but for many decades it did enjoy social democracy and reasonable equality of economic opportunity. Mr. Hoover must have heard of the era of free land, of the great, wholesome influence of the American frontiers, of the initiative and self-reliance of the pioneers and their contempt for bureaucratic red tape and routine. But his dim notions of the American spirit have little relevance to the conditions of the present age. There are those who say that he has no magnanimity, no sense of social justice, no tenderness or sympathy. They may be right. But what is worse, *he has no sense of actuality*. Facts and statistics, when unpleasant, leave him, the engineer and economist, cold and indifferent. No wonder his tools and hirelings doctor and manipulate statistics and distort painful facts.

Mr. Hoover's distrust and hatred of bureaucracy and bureaucratic domination are natural and commendable. But had he taken the trouble to study the literature of constructive and scientific radicalism, he would not have committed himself to the absurdity that any departure from what he calls Americanism or American individualism necessarily involves an addition to the bureaucracy and all its works. Few enlightened American or European Socialists favor the extension of the functions and powers of the state as it exists. To nationalize this or that industry is no longer tantamount to turning it over to the clumsy and maladroit hands of politicians and bureaucrats. Mr. Hoover should read Norman Thomas's "America's Way Out." Public ownership and operation can and may mean public ownership and operation by the ablest and most efficient men available.

Mr. Hoover, as an engineer and organizer, might do much for genuine individualism and true democracy by opposing, not public ownership and pro-public operation of utilities and other essential industries, but political and bureaucratic operation and management of such enterprises. Under the system extolled by him, governmental business agencies—and there are many of them—are constantly ham-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

pered and impeded by office-holders and office-seekers who think more of electioneering and campaign victories than of public assets and administrative efficiency. The Farm Board and its stabilization corporations have been coerced into price-fixing and market-pegging ventures. The heavy deficits in the national postal service are due to political meddling, the spoils system, and rate policies wholly alien to business principles. Mr. Hoover, notwithstanding his devotion to individualism, has never recommended the separation of the postal service from partisan and spoils politics, or its emancipation from "bureaucratic domination." Why not turn it over to a group of capable and alert business executives with instructions to operate it on sound economic principles but, of course, not for private or public profit? The same question arises in the case of Muscle Shoals. Mr. Hoover, the economist and engineer, is willing to waste public assets, but not to call upon public-spirited men of demonstrated capacity to conserve and utilize such assets.

What *is* the matter with Mr. Hoover? My diagnosis is perfectly simple. In the first place, he is ignorant or woefully behind the times. He uses catch phrases and tags, and these serve his purposes with the Babbitts and the plutocrats, big and little. He has no need of clear ideas and no conception of the scientific method as applied to politics and social economics. In the second place, Mr. Hoover is a pedant and doctrinaire. His farcical Children's Charter; his talk about the Home and the Family; his boasts (how sickly and ludicrous they sound now!) in connection with full garages, school attendance, radio sets, the decline and abolition of poverty—all sound hollow. They *are* hollow. Mr. Hoover's whole creed is hollow and shallow. It may impose upon the sentimentalists, but it cannot impress or attract the man or woman who is able to form and entertain his own convictions upon social, economic, and political problems.

A word, finally, about Mr. Hoover's position on the question of federal relief appropriations, or doles. To urge State, county, and city relief organizations and funds is good horse sense. To emphasize *primary* local responsibility and local solidarity under such conditions as now exist is not, however, absolutely to bar federal aid should local efforts prove inadequate. Just what sacrosanct principle enjoins State, county, and municipal doles while forbidding federal doles? And why is character sapped and undermined by federal doles, but not by local doles, or by private charity? Bread lines and soup kitchens, according to Mr. Hoover, nourish and sustain self-respect and dignity, provided private and local public philanthropy alone finance these authentic American institutions. Such reasoning cannot be taken seriously. There is nothing "un-American" in federal aid and relief extended under exceptional and critical situations. If Mr. Hoover fears precedents, a habit of looking to Uncle Sam, he can guard against that peril by insisting on the maximum of effective cooperation between the States and their subdivisions, on the one hand, and the federal agencies on the other. Only a pedant can adhere stubbornly to the indefensible attitude he has adopted on the so-called dole question. And Mr. Hoover is not even a *consistent* pedant, since he makes concessions to hated doctrines from political and partisan motives.

Hope for Porto Rico

By ERNEST GRUENING

PORTO RICO and its plight have been receiving advertising unprecedented in the island's thirty-three years under the American flag. President Hoover's visit was the culmination of the recent effort to call to the attention of all agencies in the continental United States that might be helpful the pressing needs of a million and a half Porto Ricans. And back of this dramatization of national responsibility and duty to this small insular Caribbean territory lies an interesting tale of personal effort and achievement. It concerns Governor Theodore Roosevelt.

I'll confess that my estimate of young Teddy as a public servant was not high. Observation of some of his public acts and utterances confirmed a decidedly unfavorable opinion. I could specify amply, but why do it? Of course almost any one of us can look back on our younger days and recall what asses we sometimes made of ourselves—just a few years back. In Teddy's case, the fierce, white light of public office beat upon most of his performances. This digression—an expression of a purely personal view—is pertinent only in so far as it strengthens a favorable judgment on the eighteen months' service of Theodore Roosevelt as Governor of Porto Rico. To anticipate, I think he has found himself.

We "got" Porto Rico in the still romantic era of American thought. Those were the happy days before Professor Beard had discovered the economic basis of our history. That was the epoch when we believed passionately that there was no privilege or opportunity equal to belonging to the "land of the free and the home of the brave." Those were the halcyon days expressed in music by John Philip Sousa's marches, in literature by Richard Harding Davis's adventurous gentlemen, in art by Frederick Remington's frontiersmen. We cheered from coast to coast the news "General Miles captures Porto Rico without a shot."

The Porto Ricans fully shared the hopefulness for a new and better era. Though the least rebellious colony of the Spanish crown in the New World, Porto Rico had suffered its share of exploitation, neglect, absentee landlordism, and military rule. We started off pretty well, too. Self-government and political freedom, which the Porto Ricans had never enjoyed, were to be theirs as rapidly as it seemed likely that they could adapt themselves to these profound transformations. The Foraker Act began the process; the Jones Act, now in force, extended citizenship to Porto Ricans in 1917. There was some early improvement in hygiene and sanitation under the efficient direction of the War Department's Bureau of Insular Affairs. Smallpox and yellow fever have been virtually eliminated. A substantial public-school system was initiated of which over a thousand new school buildings afford concrete evidence, and to which a

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

thirty-fold increase in the annual expenditure for primary and secondary education impressively testifies. Public works and good roads have been built.

And yet the generation under the Stars and Stripes has been a hope deferred. The Porto Ricans remain a poverty-stricken people, undernourished, a prey to disease, in the rural districts a peasantry unable to rise in the social and economic scale, weighted down by inherited handicaps beyond their power to remove unaided.

After thirty-two years of incorporation in the "land of opportunity," Porto Rico has an educational situation in the rural communities which was declared by the Brookings Institution survey in 1930 to be "nothing short of deplorable." Only 40 per cent of the children are registered; school buildings do not exist to take care of more than that proportion. The 1920 census reported 74 per cent of the adult rural population to be illiterate—and Porto Rico is essentially rural.

The mortality from tuberculosis—in a country where air and sunlight are hard to avoid—is higher than anywhere else in the Western Hemisphere, four and a half times that of the continental United States. Governor Roosevelt was shocked shortly after his arrival in October, 1929, upon an inspection of a municipal hospital for incurables, to find a woman dying of tuberculosis with her ten months' baby in bed beside her. Although the child was removed, it had already been infected. This case was not exceptional. Often in humble homes he saw mother and father racked by the cough of consumption in its advanced stages, surrounded by six or more children. Investigation disclosed that not only were existing facilities entirely inadequate, but that all funds that could possibly be diverted to combat this one disease would not begin to suffice. The one insular sanitarium had beds for 290 public patients. Local hospitals and various other institutions could take care of 200 more. Against this total of 490, some 35,000 cases required attention!

Similarly widespread are malaria and hookworm, with correspondingly inadequate means of combating them. Though these diseases take a relatively lower toll of life, their debilitating effects are disastrous, greatly reducing the victims' earning power. No material progress has been made in combating malaria in recent years. Some 600,000 Porto Ricans are afflicted with hookworm. Shoes, which are essential to prevent reinfection, are luxuries beyond the reach of a considerable portion of the population.

Coupled with disease is undernourishment. Sixty per cent of the island's children, Governor Roosevelt reported to Washington six months ago, were "greatly undernourished, many . . . on the verge of starvation." To meet the immediate situation he appealed to President Hoover, who arranged that the American Child Health Association should investigate the island. Its report led the American Relief Association Children's Fund to contribute $100,000. The Golden Rule Foundation contributed $50,000. Out of these funds some $25,000 was spent to establish milk stations for babies. The rest was used through school lunchrooms, which automatically became an institution on the island, so great was the need for them. "A large percentage of the children would practically go unfed if these lunchrooms did not exist," Colonel Roosevelt subsequently reported to the War Department, which by a strange anomaly still has charge of Porto Rico's destinies. "More often than not, the meal furnished by the school was the only substantial nourishment the children had to eat during the day." The funds from the above sources, in addition to what was raised in Porto Rico, did not suffice. For, as the Governor pointed out, while 220,000 children were attending school, 280,000 others for whom no school accommodations existed were equally underfed and undernourished.

The economic problem is an arc in the vicious circle. With sugar the major crop, coffee second, and little cultivation of foodstuffs for home consumption, these latter have to be imported at United States prices paid in Porto Rican wages. "We have, therefore," as Governor Roosevelt points out, "the anomaly of an island whose principal industry is agriculture importing most of its food." Considering the small margin of subsistence left from the workers' wages, it is plain that the island's economy, based in part on the sugar *central,* and thus making a large portion of its rural population not farmers but agricultural wage slaves, is scarcely beneficial to them, and definitely bars the road to their economic emancipation. The average annual wage on the island is about $150. This is approximately doubled by what wife and children may bring in. But with families averaging eight persons, even $300 a year means destitution beyond the conception of the average continental American.

The Brookings survey, headed by Dr. Victor S. Clark, last year summed up the situation thus:

> While the standard of living on the whole appears to be somewhat higher than it was thirty years ago, there is no evidence to indicate that it has been improving in recent years. Indeed, it is possible that since the war period conditions have grown gradually worse.

Theodore Roosevelt decided to do something about it—and he has already made an excellent start. This effort is subdivided into a score or more of initiatives and enterprises. He familiarized himself with the problem at first hand, visiting the remotest hamlets and isolated mountain shacks where no insular executive had ever been seen. He made existing funds go farther by efficient administration. Next he, and Mrs. Roosevelt, have sought to develop all kinds of new smaller manufactures and crafts, reviving the fine Porto Rican needlework and finding a market for it at home and abroad. He has stimulated the growing of food staples by every rural family. At this point he has had difficulty with certain of the large sugar companies, though others have cooperated willingly.

Next he has sought for Porto Rico the aid which Congress under various acts extends to the States. He carried his efforts personally to Washington, and secured the island's first federal highway appropriation, a million dollars for asphalting roads. He has sought to enlist the cooperation of everyone, from President Hoover down, in the effort to have extended to Porto Rico the Smith-Hughes and George-Reed Acts for education, the Fess-Kenyon Act for health work, the Smith-Lever and Clarke-McNary Acts for agriculture. He is having made a soil survey—never before undertaken—so that agriculture may be developed more scientifically. He is giving special attention to the studies in tropical agriculture pursued at the College of Agriculture at Mayaguez, a part of the University of Porto Rico, directed by Dr. Carlos E. Chardon, an expert in many phases of tropical cultivation who has recently become chancellor of

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the university. This and the building up of a great School of Tropical Medicine, already established and operated in cooperation with Columbia University, offer opportunities not merely for self-help, but for international service.

Well-directed energy, enthusiasm, efficiency—these might have been expected of young Teddy. With it all is a very genuine modesty, which is perhaps a corollary to the evident immensity of the task. "The Porto Ricans are working their way out; I am just an instrument to try to clear some obstacles from their path," he insists.

Even more significant is an attitude which almost overnight secured the affection and cordial support of the Porto Rican people. His intensive study of Spanish, which soon enabled him not only to gain the confidence of the *jíbaros*—the poor mountain whites—in his personal visits, but permitted his making all public addresses in Castilian, won him instant recognition as *simpático* and different from a great number of gubernatorial predecessors. (His accent is pronounced satisfactory, though his speech lacks the characteristic gestures, almost impossible of attainment by an adult, but which ten-year-old Quentin has mastered!)

Still more important is his formal recognition and appreciation of the Hispanic cultural heritage and his vision of Porto Rico as a meeting ground of the two cultures, Latin-Spanish and Anglo-Saxon, which share this hemisphere. Uniquely linked with both, lying between the two Americas, Porto Rico, as he visualizes it, may serve as a bridge to better understanding, a forum and laboratory for developing and extracting the best that is in each. The University of Porto Rico he conceives as a true university of the Americas—and indeed no other has its special potentialities for that role. "Where 'dollar diplomacy' has failed," he told assembled professors and students, "service, understanding, and sympathy will succeed." To this inter-American academy of learning, Latin Americans on their way to acquaintance with Anglo-America are to come. There Americans from the United States are to get their first initiation into the culture to the south of us. Teddy, recently initiated, is an ardent convert. He quotes with gusto the sonorous onomatopoeic rhythms of Luis Palos Matos—"the Porto Rican Vachel Lindsay," the Governor calls him.

"Can't some of you persuade Harry Stimson," he urged a group of university teachers and others in the First Seminar in the Caribbean, "to appoint some of our qualified Porto Rican young men to the diplomatic service in the Spanish-speaking countries?" And he pointed out how valuable the familiarity of Porto Rican Americans with the psychology, customs, and language of their Hispanic-American brothers would prove to the State Department.

The list of Porto Rico's problems is longer. Overpopulation, steadily increasing, cries aloud for more than palliatives. A volume could properly be dedicated thereto. "Unless the population remains at a standstill, Porto Rico is heading straight for disaster," is the sound view of Professor José C. Rosario, one of the island's foremost educators, who, moreover, voices the prevailing conviction of its social scientists, that while the birth rate remains at its present Himalayan height, approximately forty per thousand, "all solutions for problems will fail." Absentee ownership is an important obstacle to progress. This category of the Roosevelt ian undertakings, too, is incomplete, and pending their further development had better be left so. But there is little on the island that has not felt the quickening touch of his buoyant activity.

Contemplating, as I have for more than a decade, the darker aspects of our Caribbean policy, and the tragic bitterness and incalculable harm that our recent imperialistic ventures have created, it is heartening to come, unexpectedly, on a picture that is happily different. Porto Rico's plight, incidentally, is a caustic reminder that we might profitably have begun charity at home, and have expended some of the enforced benevolence which Haitians and Dominicans did not ask for on Caribbean territory where we have a legitimate mandate. And as those misguided excursions demand opposition, so, conversely, the gallant effort of the Roosevelts, Mr. and Mrs., and their genuine desire to make the vaunted blessings of American citizenship assume reality for Porto Rico's long-neglected Americans are worthy of encouragement and support. The job concerns us all.

A Different View

By THEODORE SCHROEDER

GOVERNOR Theodore Roosevelt cannot be justly appraised by merely knowing his performances. We must also know his opportunities and his evasions. Porto Rico's basic problem is overpopulation, with 460 persons per square mile, on nothing but agriculture. The result is women earning from 12 to 25 cents a day; and men from 40 to 60 cents a day on seasonal employment. With 60 per cent unemployed it is misleading piffle to talk about the average rates of wages or income. The Brookings survey says that with their birth rate of 39 per 1,000, all ordinary solutions must fail. For this overpopulation there is no remedy except birth control and education for emigration. The first offends a large moral superstition; the second offends American labor politicians, who always oppose the democratization of welfare. Neither solution for overpopulation could promote Mr. Roosevelt's Presidential ambitions. He evaded both issues.

The second big problem is the ownership of most of the best lands by American corporations, in apparent violation of the plain letter of the Organic Act of Porto Rico. The remedy is plainly escheat proceedings. But Mr. Roosevelt could not think of anything so offensive to the future source of campaign funds. Here silence reigns, probably because he understands that Porto Rico must not be made an issue in the United States as are the Philippines.

Mr. Roosevelt encouraged millions in Congressional appropriations to boom real estate, by harbor dredging and road building, but left the building of better human beings to private charities. Even here he exhibits himself as a canny politician. Porto Rico, with 1,600,000 people, has 35,000 tuberculosis victims, 200,000 malarial, 600,000 with hookworm, and ?00,000 syphilitics. Roosevelt, to relieve this, picked tuberculosis for the major emphasis of his charitable enterprises. Here almost nothing can be accomplished, because no charity can permanently relieve the overcrowding and starvation which are the causes of tuberculosis. However, tuberculosis has a spectacular emotional appeal, in the States, which hookworm and syphilis do not

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

have. Presidential ambitions cannot be promoted by asking charity for hookworm and syphilis cures. They are practically ignored, therefore, in his American appeals.

It would take a long essay to exhibit young Roosevelt in the true perspective of Porto Rican realities, and I have been offered space only for this brief note. I believe that the whole story would show that predominantly Roosevelt's viewpoint is that of a medieval feudal baron, enhancing the value of his estates while evading the democratization of education and welfare.

In the Driftway

THE Drifter has just received the following communication from a woman whose name he withholds for reasons which he will subsequently explain:

> Dear friend I am a miners wife I live in the coal fields of W. Va. where the miners and their families are suffering for food and clothing I have ten children and we are naked and barefooted and unless some good friend helps us I dont know what we are to do when the cold weather comes on. hundreds of families are throwed out of their houses on the county road with the sun and rain pouring down on them. If you have any clothing you can send me for my children just anything. I can sew and make over clothing to fit the children If you dont have anything will you pleas give this letter to some one who will send me their cast of clothing for my children.

Upon receipt of this letter the Drifter was instantly galvanized into action. He took the document to a generous friend who promised money; he took it to a lady with children of her own, who with tears in her eyes declared she would at once make up a box of cast-offs, as warm and good as possible, for the barefooted ten. He took it to one of his colleagues of *The Nation,* who demanded that it be instantly rushed into type, name, address, and all, to make without fail the coming issue.

* * * * *

AND then, acting upon the habit of a lifetime—one that he has vainly tried to shake off—he began to think. What will happen, he thought, if the letter of Mrs. X appears in next week's issue of *The Nation?* In the first place, Mrs. X will be at once the recipient of more clothing than even her ten children can manage to wear in ten years; in the second place, Mrs. Y, Z, A, B, C, and to the end of the alphabet many times over will immediately write to New York editors for aid, will receive that aid in rapidly diminishing degree, will learn to dislike and distrust the generosity of New York editors, and will eventually get nothing for their trouble, not even a letter of regret. Moreover, such irresponsible and sporadic relief of individuals without regard for the need as a whole would completely demoralize the organized relief that already exists in the various communities of striking miners and their families. These well-organized and well-managed relief committees are equipped to dispense quickly and effectively such money, clothing, and food as comes to them. They know the localities and the neediest families in each one. They suffer only from inadequacy of supplies.

WITH considerable reluctance, therefore, the Drifter has turned the letter of Mrs. X over to the Emergency Committee for Strikers' Relief, whose address is 112 East Nineteenth Street, New York City. He has recommended that Mrs. X be attended to as speedily as possible. And he urges that anybody with clothing or money to spare send it without delay to the committee, not only for Mrs. X and her ten, but for the hundreds of Mrs. X's facing a winter of unemployment or of insufficient wages for work done.

THE DRIFTER

Correspondence

In Defense of Miss Walton

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: Mr. Lewis has acquired much information about Vermont, but he has something to learn about reviewing. Naturally I do not know whether Miss Walton read every word in the four Vermont books; perhaps she did and perhaps she didn't. What would Mr. Lewis have done if he had been handed four volumes, with the suggestion that he review them in about five hundred words? I suspect he would have read what interested him, done his best with the remainder, written his five hundred words, and pocketed his five dollars. It is a great tribute that he pays to *The Nation* and to *The Nation's* reviewers when he says he has learned to expect its reviewers to be conscientious. The quality of reviewing in *The Nation* is so high, in fact, that our Nobel Prize winner foams at the mouth at one example of what he considers incompetent and careless work.

There is another thing. Mr. Lewis says he knows nothing about the reviewer, but he does know the books in question. I know nothing about the books, but I know, simply from reading *The Nation,* something about the reviewer. For some time now I have read Miss Walton's reviews with growing admiration. I recall with particular pleasure her review of Miss Millay's "Fatal Interview," but that is only one of a great many intelligent and conscientious reviews she has written for you. All this has gone on with, so far as I know, no special commendation. And now she has perhaps slipped up for once, and Mr. Lewis mounts his high horse and sets out to annihilate her. His eloquence about the hard lot of authors of books may move some people, but I bet Miss Walton won't shed many tears, and I can think of at least one other *Nation* reviewer who has managed to remain dry-eyed.

Troy, September 12 GRANVILLE HICKS

Contributors to This Issue

J. B. S. HALDANE, Sir William Dunn Reader in Bio-chemistry at Cambridge University, is one of the most distinguished of British biologists and author of many important scientific works.

ERNEST GRUENING, formerly managing editor of *The Nation,* now editor of the Portland *Evening News,* is an authority on Caribbean affairs.

THEODORE SCHROEDER has spent many years in Porto Rico.

JESSIE LEMONT is the author of a book of poems, "White Nights."

FERNER NUHN contributed an essay, Art and Identity, to the last "American Caravan."

HORACE GREGORY has just published a translation of Catullus.

EDA LOU WALTON is associate professor of English at Washington Square College, New York University.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Books, Films, Drama

Snake

(Jardin des Plantes)

By JESSIE LEMONT

He curled there quiescent—
Imprisoned in the Garden,
Behind bars of metal
And thick walls of crystal
Apart in the stillness,
Withdrawn in the coils of
His own cryptic circles
That reach through the aeons—
Reach back to a Garden—
A mythical Woman
As slim as a birch-tree,
With hair spun of sunlight
And white naked body,
Arrested, transfixed by
His sinister splendor. . . .

Through bright veils of clear glass
His diamond eyes glittered;
Then slowly his head raised
High over the circles,
The tip of the coils' end
Rose upright and sent forth
The death-rattle warning—
Defensed by ringed armor,
His fangs as his javelins,
He rattled his signal,
His drum-beat of battle. . . .

Long, long since with languor
He stretched out his full length,
Each movement a silken
Slow rhythm of caressing,
Drew softly his sinuous
Voluptuous body
Against Earth's deep bosom —
Do his eyes hold visions
Of dimness of forests,
Of leaf-beds—trees arching—
Beyond bars of metal
And thick walls of crystal? . . .

A Serene Radical

More Essays of Love and Virtue. By Havelock Ellis. Doubleday, Doran and Company. $2.

TO former readers of Havelock Ellis, there will be few surprises in this latest volume of essays. They deal in the main with such questions as eugenics, birth control, and changing sexual morals and institutions, and Mr. Ellis's views on all these subjects are reasonably well known. Such modifications as appear here are mainly in emphasis and in minor details; and anyone who looks in the present volume for remarkably original ideas will be disappointed. But while most of the ideas are familiar, we must not forget that it is Ellis who has helped to make them so. In spite of the fact that there is little that is strictly new in the present essays, they are still important and unfailingly interesting.

Current criticism is right in sensing that Ellis is a writer of real stature, but it is sometimes mistaken in its conception of just what qualities create that stature; and when we praise a writer for the wrong virtues we are certain to do him an ultimate injustice. It would be easy to name a number of living writers, like Freud, Jung, and Spengler, with more seminal minds than Ellis; or writers more acute and rigorous in their logic, like Bertrand Russell and Morris Cohen; or writers more vigorous, like Shaw; or greater artists in prose. But it would be difficult to name anyone with a mind that has achieved a finer balance and harmony, a mind at once so rich, so widely curious and receptive. This harmony is apparent in the reconciliation that Ellis has effected between a temperament that contains so much that is unmistakably romantic, and a style that embodies the great traditional classical virtues of clarity, order, and good sense—with the addition of a quiet but unflinching courage, and a serenity and dignity rare not only in our time but in any time. Ellis's stature as a writer, in brief, owes at least as much to his moral as to his intellectual qualities.

His chapter in the present volume on The Revaluation of Obscenity exemplifies his characteristic approach. Ellis might easily have become more indignant on this subject than he does; he prefers to let his humor play quietly over our human imbecilities:

> Even the most estimable clergyman may safely refer to the action by which we are brought into the world by a word of Latin source in eight or more letters without risking his chances of a *congé d'élire*. But if in the course of a sermon he inadvertently referred to the same act by a good old English word of four letters—such as a child may chalk on the pavement without endangering the structure of society—he is less likely to find himself on the episcopal throne than in prison, unless by the strenuous exertions of his friends he is sent to a lunatic asylum. . . . We still live in a society which meekly permits a man to be fined or even sent to prison for the unfashionable use of perfectly correct synonyms.

Ellis then goes on to relate how impossible those who have been most energetic in the legal suppression of "obscenity" have found it to define what it is they are trying to suppress. He cites the most frequent legal definition—"which excites or promotes sexual desires"—and then asks what would happen if this definition were seriously applied. When one thousand college women were asked by Dr. Katharine Davis what they found most "sexually stimulating," the largest number replied: "Man." "The problem," comments Ellis, "thus becomes of tragic consequence, for we see that if obscenity is to be suppressed it can only be done by the extinction of one half of the human race. And as men, if asked the same question, would in an equal majority undoubtedly answer: 'Woman'—why, there goes the other half."

There are times in the present essays, however, when I wish Mr. Ellis had defined the issue more sharply, notably in his chapter on The Function of Taboos. Here he argues that taboos are essential in human life; that "below the surface there always are reasons" for them, whether those who act in accordance with them recognize those reasons or not; and that while it is often necessary to get rid of individual taboos, or to substitute good ones for bad ones, it is neither possible nor desirable to get rid of taboos generally. This line of reasoning seems to me extremely dubious, though the whole question may be simply one of definition. Mr. Ellis defines a taboo as,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

roughly, "something that is 'not done.'" and then goes on to cite as illustrations such "taboos" as that against performing certain natural functions in public, and those against stealing and murder. But this seems to be stretching the word taboo unduly, to cover virtually the whole network of conventions. The essence of the taboo, it seems to me—regardless of whether any particular one happens to be socially advantageous or otherwise—is that it is observed *superstitiously,* or at best unthinkingly, rather than from any direct perception of its social consequences. If there are rational reasons against a certain act, and if the people of any society avoid that act consciously for those reasons, it is hardly fair, and it is certainly confusing, to call the avoidance a taboo, even if it happens to be supported by social pressure. Even if it were true that "there always are reasons" for taboos, no current taboo can ever be justified by its *historical* reasons, but only by its effect on current social welfare. But if any existing taboo is defensible only on the ground of its essential present rationality, it cannot be defended *as* a taboo.

HENRY HAZLITT

America's Two Cultures

America Hispana: A Portrait and a Prospect. By Waldo Frank. Charles Scribner's Sons. $3.50.

FOR years we have not lacked a voice here and there telling of valuable deposits south of the Rio Grande—and by that was not meant copper or *guano.* Connoisseurs of the Southwest like Mary Austin, and particularly that very devoted band, the scientists of the American Indian, have long insisted that the quality of aboriginal and present Spanish-Indian culture was being fatuously underappreciated. In the last decade or two these scattered enthusiasms have got large reenforcement. The world has become aware of an authentic renaissance in Mexico, truly based on the native life. Journalists, sociologists, folklorists, novelists, and even an ambassador of the United States have fallen in love with the land of mesa and mountain valley, Franciscan church, Indian dance, and folk festival—sensing, perhaps, in the slow tempo, the basking calm of Indian village, the bright hand-arts, communal cornfields, and moneyless marts, virtues lost and longed for in the specialized American world.

Waldo Frank's study takes in more than Mexico, takes in as well the whole of Central and South America. Developed from a lecture tour of the southern continent, his ambitious project has been to portray and then prognosticate the cultures of this entire world. His approach is by way of a geographical mysticism, first in affirming credence in an original land-bridge between Spain and Central America—the lost Atlantis, in fact—and likewise between Asia and America, which mythical connections become for him the symbol of a final spiritual unity. And secondly, in conjuring up the dominating earth influences of the various South American sections: of rock and sun in the Andes, the pampa of Argentina, Chile's Pacific slope, the forest of Brazil, etc. To this is added an historical analysis of the various racial qualities: greed and piety in the Spaniard, the social genius of the Incas, Aztec resignation, and negroid naturism, with a speculation upon the resulting *mestizo,* whose crucial role and possibilty of emergence along the lines of his best inheritance Mr. Frank believes in, but whose present state he describes as slothful and chaotic.

An interlude evokes the careers of San Martín and Bolívar. Then follows a prospect of the two Americas: "half worlds" both, according to Mr. Frank, the northern a body without a spirit, the southern a spirit without a body. For the northern world Mr. Frank holds out an idea of radical spiritual conversion by way of a new concept of the "relative" as opposed to the absolute person. For the southern continent he outlines a process of organization involving "vertebration" or morale, federation of the more akin states, and "integration" of its practical with its spiritual life. Threading the whole book are Mr. Frank's oft-repeated philosophical tenets: of the cosmos as a "continuum," of the complementariness of power and love, etc.

On the plane of theory, much that Mr. Frank argues must be agreed with. North America *is* weak in ends, South America in means. On certain particulars there will be less agreement. Some will not prize the Conquest—Catholic heritage and all—as highly as Mr. Frank does, who ignores such a truly spiritual catastrophe (yet a proper part of the sort of "whole" built up by the medieval church) as the burning of Aztec and Maya libraries. Some will feel, in fact, that the Spanish spirit has been unduly advanced by Mr. Frank, at the expense of the native Indian. When it comes to our own country, some of us may feel that the absence of all qualities growing out of the Protestant movement, a tradition bitterly attacked by Mr. Frank, would result in a considerable spiritual impoverishment, and that his description of the virtue of toleration, for instance, as mere indifference is unfair to the whole libertarian struggle.

So much for the "argument" of the book. But now it must be noted that Mr. Frank's writing, here as elsewhere, has the unfortunate effect of being all "argument." At the crucial point of communication, when the reader is looking for the word which, to quote Robert Frost, is a "deed," there is only—more argument, more theory. We read that "the need of the United States is a new germinal value." That this value is "a new concept of the person," "the person as part of the whole." But the thing remains abstract. It is clear that what Mr. Frank is really interested in is not a value so much as a system. To work out his system engages him, and throughout his book all observations, all symbols, are so quickly abstracted into the system that they lose what evocative power they might have had. Along with this is a certain blindness to the creative power of the reader—as for instance when Mr. Frank compares the dilemma of the Hispanic world under North American economic aggression to the plight of spineless water creatures during the age when land rose and rivers flowed and (according to a theory) to keep their habitats in the current the creatures were forced to achieve vertebrae. One can imagine the enthusiasm of the young South American reading this and seeing himself likened to a jelly fish.

So "America Hispana," for all its pretentions, is likely to fall back to a level of publicism, where it should have an accomplishment in stimulating interest between the two Americas.

FERNER NUHN

The Power of Pleasing

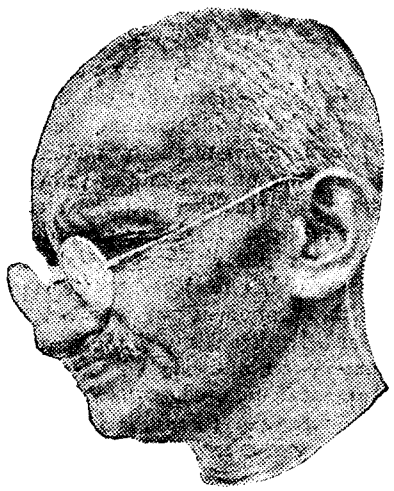
The Diary and Letters of Madame D'Arblay (Frances Burney). Edited and Selected with a Preface and Notes by Muriel Masefield. E. P. Dutton and Company. $3.75.

The Nun of the Ca'Frollo. The Life and Letters of Henrietta Gardner Macy. By Clementine Bacheler and Jessie Orr White. William Farquar Payson. $5.

WHEN she was twenty-six, Miss Fanny Burney, having lived quietly at home because she was, unlike her brothers and sisters, thought too shy to go to school, came up to London. Her subsequent career reads like a miracle. Literary lions bowed down before her; the great Dr. Johnson would have her sit beside him and listen to his playful flattery. Sir Joshua Reynolds, Sheridan, Gibbon, Burke the famous, all vied with one another to do her honor. It is true that Miss Burney had been so foresighted as to write a novel called "Evelina"; but epoch-making as that book seemed

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

GANDHI
speaks for himself



MAHATMA GANDHI AT WORK
His Own Story Continued

Edited by C. F. Andrews

The epic story contained in this second volume of Gandhi's autobiography, edited by one of his closest friends, goes far to explain the beliefs and methods through which he has reached a unique place among the leaders of world thought. We can see here before our eyes, in its dramatic setting, an insignificant body of persecuted and despised men and women transformed into a conquering army That "moral equivalent for war" which William James advocated, is set up as a practical working principle. To the West, in its efforts to recover from the disastrous effects of War, it offers a way of peace. No clearer understanding of Mahatma Gandhi's life, character, and program can be had than in this new book. *Just published* $2.50

MAHATMA GANDHI HIS OWN STORY

". . . an almost incredible autobiography. . . . And it is a necessary book to any who wishes to understand what is happening in India today," says the *New York Herald Tribune*. "The reason for this man's overwhelming influence emerges from this book."—London *Times*. $2.50

MAHATMA GANDHI'S IDEAS

Gandhi's ideas and philosophy are set forth in his own writings, selected and edited, with a running commentary, by Mr. Andrews. For those who would understand the inner life of India's saint, there is no better exposition available. Read in conjunction with Gandhi's own story, this volume gives a fully rounded view of the man. $3.00

Obtainable at all bookstores

THE MACMILLAN COMPANY : NEW YORK

to a literary world to which simple realism was completely strange, it seems inadequately to explain the social triumph of its author. There was something about Fanny Burney herself that made her sought after by men and women more than twice her age and with more than twice her fame. From her letters and her diaries one gathers that she was by no means without wit. She could demurely hold her own in conversation even with the great. But besides wit she had great commonsense, a gentle and sympathetic manner, most of all, a refreshing goodness and kindness that must have been very winning.

This goodness is very evident in Miss Burney's later life, when as Second Keeper of the Robes to Queen Charlotte she described herself as having experienced from the royal family nothing but the most warm-hearted affection and generosity. It was so also with her friends, both at the English court and later among the French émigrés to whom her marriage brought her. It is fairly plain that people were kind to Miss Burney because she was kind to them. She liked them, quite simply and wholeheartedly—except James Boswell, for whom she could never conquer her distaste.

This affection for people is demonstrated even more clearly in the life of Henrietta Gardner Macy, who, born in Illinois and educated at Antioch College and at Vassar, spent the last forty years of her life as a busy and happy expatriate in Venice. Miss Macy not only liked everybody; her likes took the form of the most ardent and unremitting generosity and love. In Venice the American Ambassador, the porter, the gondolier, the Mayor, various Marchesas, innumerable fish-women and wine-sellers, all the children in town, and the great Duse herself were among her unchanging friends. She was always poor in spite of a lifetime of fairly successful work as an artist, because whenever she had money, she had also some poor soul to share it with—or give it to entire. In her school for the children of the glass-blowers of Murana she taught thrift, kindness, cleanliness, punctuality, and the practical values of a life of work. In her own life she faithfully exemplified these virtues. She was courageous, resourceful, witty, and good. Her goodness was evidently unmistakable to anybody who saw her, and likewise irresistible.

As pictures, therefore, of two women who were universally admired and loved mainly because they were good, these books provide refreshing entertainment. Miss Masefield has been clever enough to let Fanny Burney do her own talking. Miss Macy's editors have interspersed her letters and notes with leaden-footed comments which fortunately do not much detract from the value of the book. Both Miss Burney and Miss Macy could write charmingly and with detachment of their own lives, which meant often of their disappointment and pain. Neither had an easy life but both had many friends. Their letters should not fail to make them more.

DOROTHY VAN DOREN

Middle-Class Tragedy

Saturday Night at the Greyhound. By John Hampson. Alfred A. Knopf. $2.

IT is very nearly impossible to read or write about John Hampson's first novel without enthusiasm. Here we have in the work of a young novelist something far more than the usual display of a natural talent. Mr. Hampson's people are mature and well-rounded characterizations, and the situation that he presents in "Saturday Night at the Greyhound" is one that has implications far beyond a mere statement of realistic facts.

"The Greyhound," an inn at Grovelace, one of those delightfully rural English villages, is the scene of action. The

DIGITIZED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

time is Saturday night, a big night for business in any public house anywhere. The story is told by means of the internal monologue, each character speaking a part in language as crisp and direct as the dialogue of a well-written play.

We have Fred Flack, the big, bluff, drunken landlord; Ivy, his wife, who sees all too clearly the ruin of "The Greyhound" and her own life; and young Tom, her brother, assistant at the bar, whose love for his sister, and hatred of Fred, her husband, and whose own sense of frustration are bound together in a neurotic merry-go-round that leads nowhere but to disaster. And there is Clara, the barmaid, caught by an inevitable design of circumstances, in love with Flack, the landlord. The results are clear enough; they are all the materials of lower middle-class tragedy. One waits for the crash.

Behind the dramatic story is portrayed the decline of the English middle-class. Ivy and Tom were children of a respectable, well-to-do keeper of a public house in Birmingham. The death of the father and mother and the passing of "The Crown and Cushion" brought the tradition of material success to an end. Ivy had married attractive Fred Flack, a bounder and a braggart, product of an environment very like her own, and she did not have the strength to keep him in line. Tom had no other interest in life but his sister; her marriage had separated them, bitterly; but when Ivy had sunk her inheritance in "The Greyhound" and asked him to help her run the place, he could not refuse. The ideals and morality of middle-class society in decline are not strong enough to carry the weight of fundamental moral issues—and economic failure accelerates the process of disintegration.

Mr. Hampson presents his case curtly, frankly, decisively. His story is stripped for action; one may read the moral between the lines.

HORACE GREGORY

Toward Classicism

The Signature of Pain, and Other Poems. By Alan Porter. The John Day Company. $2.50.

PRONOUNCEMENTS from all sides inform us that we are to return to the emphasis upon "taste" and the avoidance of "passion" prescribed by the eighteenth century. With T. S. Eliot, as always, leading, and with the younger, less creative critics following, the procession moves away from "feeling," from "mere sensation" in poetry toward lucidity and "purity" of form. This present century which, in Eliot's words is "with its elaborate equipment of science and psychological analysis even less fitted than the Victorian age to appreciate poetry as poetry" must be fled. The maudlin nineteenth century is, of course, the horror of horrors. But the procession comes to stay, at last, in the strictly defined realms of the eighteenth century and to blow its trumpets of admiration over those developments in the seventeenth century which moved toward the Classical Age.

Poets, therefore, who follow this procession must divorce themselves deliberately from the moving forces of their own day. Such simplicity as they aspire to can result only from working with ideas perfectly understood and long recognized. Such maturity as they would gain is possible only through living in the past; for the world of the present is forever in its childhood. Choosing a world whose "taste" is already judged, they must write down the ideas of that world in the patterns that world has perfected. They must set down poetry which is not the vulgar "metamorphosis of their own feeble desires and lust, or what they believe to be the intensity of passion," but poetry which is the mirror of a world fixed in time and space, of a mind reduced in its explorations to a small portion of the past already critically comprehended.

Just Published In The
MODERN LIBRARY
AT 95 CENTS A COPY

WILLA CATHER'S
Famous Novel
DEATH COMES FOR THE ARCHBISHOP
COMPLETE AND UNABRIDGED IN ONE VOLUME

Other Recent Titles
A HISTORY OF THE BORGIAS *By Frederick Baron Corvo*
THE LIVES OF THE TWELVE CAESARS *By Suetonius*
SANINE *By Artzibashev*
THE DECAMERON *By Boccaccio*
THE OLD WIVES' TALE *By Arnold Bennett*
THE COUNTERFEITERS *By André Gide*

THE MODERN LIBRARY
GIANTS
These are books that obviously belong on the Modern Library list, but whose texts are much too long for the usual format. The "Giant" format has been designed to permit their publication in one compact volume, complete and unabridged.
TOLSTOY'S WAR AND PEACE
BOSWELL'S LIFE OF SAMUEL JOHNSON
VICTOR HUGO'S LES MISERABLES
One Dollar A Copy

At all booksellers
Send for the new Modern Library list
THE MODERN LIBRARY, INC., 20 East 57th Street, N. Y.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

BERTRAND RUSSELL'S

most important book in years

In THE SCIENTIFIC OUTLOOK Bertrand Russell has written what he regards as one of his most important books. He analyzes the logic of Eddington and Jeans, who believe that science leads back to religion. He is equally opposed to the thinkers, Russian and others, who embrace technological society. And he establishes himself as one of the foremost wits of our day, in a book that will be quoted and discussed wherever thinking people gather. $3.00

THE SCIENTIFIC OUTLOOK

THE UNIVERSE in the Light of MODERN PHYSICS by Max Planck. The originator of the quantum theory writes his first book for the general reader. $2.00

ECONOMICS IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY by Theo Suranyi-Unger. **EDITED WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY EDWIN R. A. SELIGMAN.** A complete and important survey of modern economic thinking, in its philosophical and social implications. Published Oct. 8. $5.00

W. W. NORTON & CO., INC.
70 FIFTH AVENUE NEW YORK

WAR

Organized Destruction and Mass Murder by Civilized Nations

By SCOTT NEARING

Author of "Black America," "The Twilight of Empire," etc.

Dr. Nearing contends that war is not a relapse into barbarism—rather, that it is the primary business of civilization.

At All Bookstores, $3

The VANGUARD PRESS
100 Fifth Avenue New York City

Now, as Eliot, who is always one step ahead of his followers, has already pointed out, there is something to be gained by this retreat into the past: lucidity, critical values, perfection of form—and most important of all, a historic sense which corrects the extravagances and absurdities of a limited contemporary view. But there is also a loss: vitality is likely to be opposed to "maturity," and in restricting himself to the past and gaining, thereby, an adulthood, the poet is likely to lose emotional receptivity. He no longer taps the springs of his own life; he lives in a dead world.

Alan Porter in his book, "The Signature of Pain," is one of those poets who has returned to the late seventeenth century and its manner. He is complete master of the ideas and patterns of that century. He is hailed by English critics—always eager to praise technical perfection—as among the best of the moderns. The truth is that he is one of those moderns who, following the critical trend, have returned to the classical past. And he has both gained and lost thereby: something of the expertness and the maturity of point of view of the seventeenth century masters is his, but their passion—and there is no other word for the intensity which was Donne's, and even at times, Marvell's—is not his. How could it be? They felt the world in which they lived; Porter, born in the twentieth century, grasps that past world intellectually only, and not emotionally. The experiences of life have come to him second hand. He has made himself a poet through reliving, as it were, the ideas of older poets, not through experiencing life at first hand. All this is legitimate enough and it has, in Alan Porter's case, resulted in fine technical accomplishment; it has resulted in making him, for those who hold today for the classical renaissance, one of the leading figures. But for those of us who feel in this retreat into the past something artificial and timid, it names Porter another poet who proves that divorcement from the present, chaotic though it may be, is likely to result in an emotional emptiness out of which comes no great poetry. Precision and clarity, the banners flung on the wind today by certain of our critics, Alan Porter certainly has. But he has not what T. S. Eliot cannot escape, the sense of Life, of the immediacy of events, be they present or past; therefore, his verse, accomplished as it is, rings a little hollow.

EDA LOU WALTON

Books in Brief

The Rediscovery of the Frontier. By Percy H. Boynton. University of Chicago Press. $2.50.

Mr. Boynton has written a guide to reading rather than a piece of critical literature, but the result is no less valuable because the aim was modest. The American books to which he introduces us, and which he ably summarizes, are those which in the present generation, whether by way of criticism, of fiction, or of biography, have dealt with the idea of the frontier in a more or less realistic fashion. Scholars like Ralph Rusk and Dorothy Dondore, autobiographers like Hamlin Garland and Glenway Wescott, novelists like Edna Ferber, Willa Cather, Sinclair Lewis, Ole Edvart Rölvaag, Martha Ostenso, and Herbert Quick are treated with an impartiality commendable in one who approaches so controversial a subject. There is always in the bargain a backward glance at figures in American literature who anticipated the present movement. Mr. Boynton has rendered any student of American literature a distinct and solid service.

Easy Pickings. By Al Hill. Brentano's. $2.

This is the crudely written autobiography of a former professional crook, now an actor in Hollywood, the genuineness of which is vouched for by Jim Tully. Hill was a tough kid

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

in a tough neighborhood. He became a trapeze performer while still a youngster, traveling with a vaudeville act all over the United States. But he tired of the job and decided to live on his wits. He was thief, pickpocket, burglar; he became a drug addict, and finally wound up in prison. He seems to have been of superior caliber in some respects for he fought his habit secretly while in prison in order not to be classed with the "cokies," nearly dying during the ordeal. When his time was up he made no new resolutions. He would start straight and see. He was more fortunate than many, found work that enabled him to live, and now has achieved a measure of success. The book is a human document without heroics or exaggerations and as such is worth perusal.

The Books of the Emperor Wu Ti. By Walter Meckauer. Minton, Balch and Company. $2.

This novel was awarded a German literary prize—it is hard to see what for. The style is without distinction, the matter without authority, the fantasy without imagination. Half of the book is dull fairy tale full of simpering symbolism, the other half revolution-, white-devil-, noble-martyr-stuff. The total effect is like that of a decorative panel in a chop suey restaurant, and as there are admirers of the latter there will perhaps be admirers of the former too.

Susan Spray. By Sheila Kaye-Smith. Harper and Brothers. $2.50.

In Susan Spray, Sheila Kaye-Smith has created a female mystic who appears in mid-Victorian times on the familiar Sussex countryside. From her earliest poverty-stricken childhood Susan thinks of herself as one apart. She imagines she has visions and is not slow to realize that these redound greatly to her practical advantage. She early becomes a leader in the little sect known as Colgate Brethren—"The splendid gate, the holy gate, the Colgate"—and later founds a faith of her own. The character of Susan the preacher, the partly self-deceived and partly witting humbug, the vain and ambitious leader, is excellently developed. But Susan the woman in her loves and marriages is never quite real nor are her three husbands fully realized. The novel has been enthusiastically received in England; and it is a careful study of a certain type of mystic mind. But as a piece of art it falls far short of "Joanna Godden."

Little Essays from the Works of Henry David Thoreau. Selected by Charles R. Murphy. Houghton Mifflin Company. $2.

Mr. Murphy has looked through Thoreau's books—and not, incidentally, through his Journals—for perfect pieces of writing one page long. Sometimes they are two pages long. But they are always perfect, and it will be well for one who is not acquainted with Thoreau to meet him in this volume, where, to be sure, he never is allowed to get going on one of the subjects nearest to his pugnacious heart, but where he displays his writing gift—never surpassed in American prose—regularly to the best advantage. Mr. Murphy has supplied a valuable companion volume to "The Heart of Thoreau's Journals."

Rome and the Romans. By Grant Showerman. The Macmillan Company. $5.

What Rome looked like, what it stood for to the rest of the Mediterranean world of which it became the source of law and fashion, how its institutions evolved and functioned, who its citizens were and how they spent their days—this is the domestication of Roman history that Professor Showerman attempts, on the whole successfully. His attitude, however, is that of the Latin classroom, uncritically reverent, toward a people undeniably great but as undeniably human.

GRAFT
IN BUSINESS

By John T. Flynn

Investors and business men generally are the victims of a vicious system whereby business is stealthily tapped for secret, unearned and often dishonest profits.

$3 At Bookstores

THE VANGUARD PRESS
100 Fifth Avenue
New York City

A New Book
"full of good things"

MODERN CIVILIZATION ON TRIAL

By C. DELISLE BURNS

"He provides us, with singular charm and persuasiveness, with an announcement of practical salvation, into which all men of good-will can enter. . . . This is an extraordinarily competent exposition of political modernism, full of good things."—George E. G. Catlin in *The Nation*

"Here is one of, if not the sanest, coolest, most astute and therefore most interesting studies of modern life that has been published to date. . . . The book should produce a feeling in any attentive reader akin to that produced by a good meal."—*Philadelphia Ledger*

At all bookstores $2.50

THE MACMILLAN COMPANY :: NEW YORK

When writing to advertisers please mention The Nation

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Know these interesting subjects.

THE Extension School of Adult Education, New York University, offers a program of organized yet unrestricted study for those who know the importance of being well informed and conversationally interesting. There are no requirements beyond your ambition. Among the courses to be offered are An Approach to Shakespeare—Some Problems of Modern Social Life—What the Modern Writers are Doing—The Modern Poets.

Registration begins on Thursday, September 10th, and continues through Saturday, September 26th.

Apply for Bulletin now. Make plans for early registration. Write Dept. N

RUFUS D. SMITH, Director, University Extension Division

NEW YORK UNIVERSITY

Washington Square East New York, N. Y.

EXTRAORDINARY CELEBRATION TOUR TO THE SOVIET UNION

INCLUDING 14 DAYS IN U. S. S. R.

Specially arranged to witness the spectacular celebration of the 14th anniversary of the October Revolution.

Visiting: Leningrad, Moscow, Ivanovo-Vosnessensk, the Kremlin, a collective farm, Red Army and Workers' clubs, factories and many places of historical and cultural interest.

$225

$230 - $235

Includes round trip steamship ticket and all hotel accomodations and meals, railways and sleepers, from New York to Moscow.

Sailing October 15
S. S. DEUTSCHLAND
S. S. EUROPA
S. S. AQUITANIA

WORLD TOURISTS, Inc.

The First American Travel Organization to Conduct Tours to the Soviet Union

175 Fifth Avenue ALgonquin 4-6656 New York

The Substitute Bride. By Clare Sheridan. Longmans, Green and Company. $2.

Recently in "Naked Truth," an account of her extraordinary career as sculptress and journalist in Russia, Mexico, Ireland and Italy, Clare Sheridan revealed her talent for reporting the unusual. In "The Substitute Bride"—the American publisher's sensational title for what appeared in England as "El Caid"—she displays the same gift. The heroine, an unconventional and courageous French girl living in Algeria, finds it possible to penetrate behind the deceiving exterior of Arab life and to win the confidence both of El Caid, the ruler of Sidi Sersour, and of the inmates of "the women's quarter." There she meets a mysterious young girl with a rebellious spirit, and at considerable danger to herself rescues her from her cloistered life. The story at this point becomes sensational, and one suspects that Mrs. Sheridan is over-conscious of the possibilities that her subject presents for an exotic screen melodrama. Yet her novel is raised above this level by its powerful and convincing account of that little known part of the Algerian population which, ruled by ancient and merciless customs, has lived for centuries behind veils and walls.

Heinrich Heine: A Critical Examination of the Poet and His Works. By H. Walter. Bloch Publishing Company. $4.25.

Coming from the department of Germanic languages and literature in McGill University, this critical biography is a commendable product of the academic method. The author is not rigidly impartial, for he frequently steps forward as a champion, but he presents both sides of every debatable point and leaves the reader freedom of choice. His style has neither modish brilliance of phrase nor the cold glitter of the psychoanalytic scalpel. Traditional snap-judgments are opposed by two of his contentions—that Heine had a strong character, and that he was an optimist beneath his mockery. Few will disagree with Professor Walter's concluding dictum: "Heine, the protagonist of individual liberty and the deadly foe of all chauvinistic patriotism, still stands right in the midst of these controversies, and is apt to be judged from the standpoint of one party or another." The lyricism of Heine was incidental to his eminently keen critical faculty.

The Life Story of Brigham Young. By Susa Young Gates in Collaboration with Leah D. Widtsoe. With a Foreword by Reed Smoot. The Macmillan Company. $5.

This book is not the definitive biography of Brigham Young that has long been needed, for the joint authors, daughter and grand-daughter respectively of Brigham Young, have written not only with warm personal devotion but also with unquestioning acceptance of the divine inspiration and leadership which Young claimed, the miracles which he is said to have performed, and the polygamy which he accepted and practiced. The fact that Senator Smoot contributes a foreword, however, gives the book a kind of official standing, and the reader who is not repelled by the pervading adulation and the serene defense of Mormon tenets and practices will find it a mine of well-ordered information that richly repays reading. Mrs. Gates is at her best in describing the early experiences of the Mormons in Illinois and Missouri, the great trek across the plains and mountains of Utah, and the incidents of what, in her hands, becomes a simple, affectionate, and rather charming domestic life in the expanded family circle. The larger aspects of political Mormonism in its relations with the Federal government are less ably handled. Brigham Young himself emerges as a powerful character, an altogether extraordinary combination of physical vigor, religious zeal, masterful control of his followers, and shrewd business and practical sense. Most of the forty-odd illustrations are of the present day.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Films

Pictures from Plays

MOTION pictures are created in three main ways: they are written directly, adapted from novels, or adapted from the stage. It seems to me that up to now pictures adapted from the stage have by far the best average record—one need merely recall such films as "The Front Page," "Street Scene," "Outward Bound," "Disraeli," "Journey's End," "Holiday," and "The Royal Family." This record has been sustained in the past fortnight in "Five Star Final" (Winter Garden), "Waterloo Bridge" (Mayfair), and "The Guardsman" (Astor). None of these pictures is a masterpiece, but all of them command respect, and "The Guardsman" commands a great deal of it. To realize their quality one may merely compare them with such a picture as "This Modern Age," which opened at the Capitol in the same week. That picture was, so far as I know, written directly for the screen. It is typical of all the pictures of flaming youth in the last decade; it is, indeed, a sort of composite photograph of them. Miss Joan Crawford is obliged to take the part of the usual heroine who is outwardly wild but inwardly simon pure. It is not fair to blame actors when they fail to make themselves convincing under such requirements. Compared with "This Modern Age" Molnar's deft comedy seems far more deft than it is, and the admirable acting of Alfred Lunt and Lynn Fontanne seems almost incredibly subtle. "Waterloo Bridge," while it falls short of the level reached by "The Guardsman," retains a quality of sincerity and courage seldom met with in pictures written directly for the screen.

The reasons for the marked average superiority of the picture adapted from the stage to the picture directly built up for the screen are not mysterious. The picture written directly is designed for a mass audience of millions. The typical Hollywood producer, even when he is himself relatively intelligent, refuses to trust this mass audience to see anything but the most blatantly obvious. A play, however, because it can survive with so much smaller an audience, can afford a few nuances; a few plays can even afford to appeal directly to the intelligent, and they sometimes succeed. A play is unlikely to be adapted for screen production unless it has been already commercially successful; therefore when it is adapted it comes with the prestige of this success behind it. The director may really respect it; and even if he regards it as a little too intelligent, a little too honest, he may decide that it is safer—safer commercially—to leave it essentially alone than radically to alter it. The adapted novel finds more difficulty in protecting itself; the changes that *must* be made in adapting it are necessarily so much greater that it is much easier to cheapen and to caricature it. Occasionally the director adheres faithfully to the spirit of the novel, and then we have an honest picture like "All Quiet"; more often what happens is what happened to Mr. Dreiser's "An American Tragedy." Yet the advantage *ought* to be with the picture directly conceived of in terms of the screen, for only such pictures can be expected to realize the medium's full possibilities. Even the best pictures adapted from plays, for example, are apt to retain a curious indoor and static quality, and to progress by means of talk rather than by talk integrated with action. One finds this both in "Waterloo Bridge" and in "The Guardsman." They are tied down by the physical limitations of this original medium. But those physical limitations are of minor importance compared with the psychological limitations that affect the great bulk of pictures written directly for the screen.

HENRY HAZLITT

ASPECTS OF MODERNISM

A series of seven lecture- discussions by distinguished artists and writers at The Institute of Arts and Sciences of Columbia University.

LEWIS MUMFORD
Author of *Sticks and Stones, The Golden Day,* etc.
1. The Modern Spirit — Wednesday, Oct. 14

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH
Dramatic critic of *The Nation*
2. In Drama — Wednesday, Oct. 21

MME. OLGA SAMAROFF
Member of faculty, Juilliard Graduate School of Music
3. In Music (illustrated) — Wednesday, Oct. 28

JOHN ERSKINE
Author of *Helen of Troy, Galahad,* etc.
4. In Literature — Wednesday, Nov. 4

JONAS LIE
American painter
5. In the Arts — Wednesday, Nov. 11

H. A. OVERSTREET
Author of *The Enduring Quest*
6. In Philosophy — Wednesday, Nov. 18

DR. L. T. JACKS
President, Manchester College, Oxford University
Author of *The Education of the Whole Man*
7. In Education — Wednesday, Nov. 25

Admission to these stimulating discussions is by Members' Annual Ticket—which also admits to more than 150 other worthwhile events by such authorities and artists as **Ruth St. Denis, Alfred North Whitehead, Rafael Sabatini, Max Eastman, William Beebe** and **Albert E. Wiggam**

You may become a member of the Institute and participate in this outstanding program. Meetings are held on weekday evenings from mid-October until April 1st, in McMillin Academic Theatre, Northeast Corner of Broadway and 116th Street.

Members' Annual Ticket, admitting to more than 150 events, lectures, concerts, plays, and recitals, is but $15. (Double membership, $25.)

THE INSTITUTE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES
Columbia University — New York

☐ I enclose $..... for a ..... membership (single, $15; double, $25), which will admit me to more than 150 Institute events.

☐ Please send me complete announcement of the Institute program for 1931-1932.

Name .....

Address .....

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"The most popular and the most scientific exposition of the subject which has ever been written."
—CHANCELLOR PHILIP SNOWDEN

Protection
or
Free Trade
By HENRY GEORGE

Unabridged-clothbound, Postpaid, $1.00

ROBERT SCHALKENBACH FOUNDATION
15 Park Place New York City

□ WITHIN THE FORTNIGHT □

PLAYS TO SEE

After Tomorrow—John Golden—W. 58 St.
†Cloudy With Showers—Morosco—W. 45 St.
Friendship—Fulton—W. 46 St.
*Grand Hotel—National—W. 41 St.
I Love an Actress—Times Square—W. 42 St.
*Just to Remind You—Broadhurst—W. 44 St.
†Ladies of Creation—Cort—W. 48 St.
†Old Man Murphy—Hudson—W. 44 St.
‡Shoot the Works—Geo. M. Cohan—B'way and 43 St.
‡The Band Wagon—New Amsterdam—W. 42 St.
*The Barretts of Wimpole Street—Empire—40 St. and B'way.
The Constant Sinner—Royale—45 St. W. of B'way.
‡Ziegfeld Follies—Ziegfeld—54 St. and 6 Ave.

* Drama. † Comedy. ‡ Musical.

Most Sensational Play of the Year!
MAE WEST
in THE CONSTANT SINNER
(See JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH'S Review in This Issue)
ROYALE THEATRE, W. 45th St. Evenings, 8:40 Mats.: Wed. & Sat.

EUROPA 154 West 55th St., Just East of 7th Ave., CIrcle 7-0129
Popular Prices — Continuous from noon to midnight!
Commencing Wednesday September 23rd!
The only worthy successor to "Two Hearts in Waltz Time!"
The romantic German screen operetta
"DIE LINDENWIRTIN VOM RHEIM"
("The Inn at the Rhine")
With the most enchanting musical score to come from abroad.
English explanatory titles!
With *KAETHE DORSCH, Germany's foremost light operetta diva.*

THE GROUP
Invites its friends to its Fourteenth Anniversaty
MUSICALE AND DANCE
Tuesday Evening, Sept. 29th, at 8:30 P. M., at 150 West 85th St.
JIM PHILLIPS
(well known Concert Singer) in a Recital of Songs
DANCING UNTIL PAST MID-NIGHT

Tuesday Evening, October 6th, at 8:30 P. M.
HEYWOOD BROUN
will speak on:
"IT SEEMS TO ME"

Sunday Afternoon, October 4th, at 4:30 P. M.
PROF. J. C. CHATTERJI
(President of the 'India Academy of America')
will speak on:
"MAHATMA GANDHI AS A WORLD FACTOR"
MUSICAL PROGRAM TEA SERVED
(Weekly Notices Mailed on Request)

Drama

In Defense of Mae West

DURING six years of professional play-going I managed to escape Miss Mae West. Last night I remedied this obvious defect in my education and after witnessing "The Constant Sinner" (Royale Theater) I am bound to confess that she is neither one-half so bad as I expected nor one-tenth so bad as the audience which gathered to see her.

I had, to be sure, supposed that the type of beauty which she represents was more completely passé than is apparently the case. Only sailors, I thought, still admired mere quantity in a woman, and I did not know that peroxide hair gleaming above curves which are laid out along truly epic lines was still supposed by a considerable section of the public to constitute Woman in her most irresistibly seductive form. But that, after all, is only a matter of fashion, and Miss West is doubtless only a kind of Lillian Russell gone slightly to seed. What really matters is that she has what the advertisements call "personality," and that she has, besides, a sound if not very subtle idea of stage technique. Suppose that she does pause every now and then in a manner which says as plainly as any words could say, "I am about to pull a gag and it's going to be dirty, too"? I have seen actresses as respectable as Ethel Barrymore descend to methods hardly more subtle, and the defense in each case is the same. Audiences laugh when they are told that they should.

As for the play—written and apparently staged by Miss West herself—it is simple-minded, lurid, and crude; but it is at least not dull with that discouraging, anemic dulness characteristic of half the respectable plays produced on Broadway. All about a woman who dragged men down and *down* and DOWN, it begins with a few dirty lines planted for the obvious purpose of assuring the audience that it is not going to be cheated out of what it came for; but once it gets under way it reveals itself as a very competent job of rough stage carpentering, and by comparison with, let us say, the drama which Arthur Hopkins has just withdrawn too promptly to give me a chance for comment, it is brilliant dramaturgy. In fact, I will go a good deal further. It is dramatically as sound and intellectually as respectable as a play like Belasco's "Lulu Belle," which ran for a year in one of our temples of art. And yet (if my memory serves me) Miss West once went actually to jail, while Mr. Belasco, so the newspapers inform us, is to have annual memorial services in several European capitals. It's the rich gets all the pleasure—and if someone will arise to proclaim in appropriate style that "they ain't done right by our Mae" I, for one, will whistle and stamp my feet.

The audience, as I have already indicated, is another matter. It is difficult to imagine just where its members come from, but I have a theory. All the little boys who, in the early days of the movies, used to emit loud "smacks" when the hero kissed the heroine, must have grown up and gathered at the Royale just for the sake of being children again. They greet every suggestive line with giggles, gurgles, shrieks, and other strange noises not usually heard in civilized society. Their minds are so active that they discover fabulous indecencies even when there is none in sight. And they exhibit a sort of famished appetite for all references to sexual matters which is at once pitiful and alarming. Nor do I see what possible good it would do to put Miss West in jail again. Her audience would still exist, and if any offense has been committed then the members of the audience committed it—not by going to the theater or by applauding what they saw there, but by *being* what they so obviously are.

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

RAND SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCE

7 East 15 St. Alg. 4-3094

Are you asking WHY—
about the puzzling problems which confront us.
The Rand School has always been in the vanguard in the field of Adult education and a leader in Workers' Education.

Stimulating and Provocative Courses and Lectures

Fall Registration Now On
Evening Sessions Only

Among a few of the Special Lecture Series are:

SOCIAL PLANNING
Various proposals for a Planned Economy
Mondays, 8.30 p.m. October 19—December 7
Lecturers: George Soule, Lewis L. Lorwin, Thomas L. Chadbourne, John T. Flynn, Lewis Mumford, H. Parker Willis, Algernon Lee

THE AMERICAN THEATRE TODAY
Thursdays, 8.30 p.m. October 8—November 12
Lecturers: Heywood Broun, Alexander Woollcott, Kenneth MacGowan, J. Brooks Atkinson, Anita Block

AUTHORS' NIGHTS
In co-operation with all of the important publishing houses—
Wednesdays. 8.30 p.m. First lecture, October 21

THE THEATRE AS A SOCIAL FACTOR THROUGHOUT THE AGES — David B. Rossi
THE CRISIS OF OUR CIVILIZATION AS REFLECTED IN MODERN LITERATURE — Elias L. Tartak
PRINCIPLES OF SOCIALISM — David P. Berenberg
A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE PRESENT ECONOMIC ORDER — Harry Delson
PSYCHOLOGY OF PERSONALITY — Joseph N. Osman
POETRY—UP PARNASSUS TO FREEDOM, PEACE, AND PLENTY — Samuel A. DeWitt
APPRECIATION OF MODERN LITERATURE — David P. Berenberg
THE PHILOSOPHY OF VALUES — Felix Cohen
HISTORY OF INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISM — Bela Low
THE CONTEMPORARY NOVEL — Peter M. Jack
AMERICAN SOCIALISM AT WORK — Louis Stanley
PRINCIPLES OF UNION ORGANIZATION — David J. Saposs
THEORETICAL ECONOMICS — Algernon Lee
SOCIAL CONFLICTS IN AMERICAN HISTORY — William E. Bohn
SOCIAL ASPECTS OF MARRIAGE AND FAMILY LIFE — Sidney E. Goldstein

No intelligent person can afford to be uninformed on economic and social problems.
Reasonable fees adjusted to meet the need of average workers
Write, phone, or call for Bulletin for details

LABOR FACT BOOK

Prepared by the
LABOR RESEARCH ASSOCIATION

Below-the-surface truths about labor in relation to industry, imperialism, war, government, etc., in handbook form. $2.00

Timely diagnosis of "three sick giants."
Labor & Coal — By Anna Rochester
Labor & Textiles — By Robert W. Dunn and Jack Hardy
Labor & Silk — By Grace Hutchins

At bookstores, $2. Complete Catalogue From
INTERNATIONAL PUBLISHERS, 381 Fourth Ave., N.Y.

RESORTS

WE'LL TAKE YOU *"for a ride"*

No longer bother about trains and time-tables. Our bus leaves the city each Saturday afternoon, and takes you back Sunday night. You are in "Lodge" atmosphere from the moment you join the merry crowd at the starting point, and have ample opportunity to get acquainted with your fellow week-enders on the way up.

First trip: Saturday, Oct. 10th—in time for a most enjoyable
COLUMBUS DAY WEEK-END

Leaves every Saturday at 3.30 p. m. from Woodlawn Station (last stop on Jerome Ave. line) starting homeward Sundays at 9.30 p.m. Charge for round trip: $1.00.

Restfully comfortable individual seats in a commodious bus, driven along a scenic route by a careful and courteous chauffeur.

(Columbus week-end return trip on Monday night)

Peekskill 1403

FURNACE DOCK RD.
PEEKSKILL, N. Y.

BLUE MOUNTAIN LODGE

RESORTS

For rest and recreation
HAMBURGER'S EVERGREEN FARM
Farmingdale, N. J. Tel. 113
VEGETARIAN HOUSE
A farm resort in a delightful rural setting. Wholesome and delicious foods. Sun baths. Bathing. All modern conveniences and amusements. Write or phone for detailed information.

ZINDOREST PARK

Monroe, N. Y. Phone: 300

A most gorgeous mansion situated on a beautiful 150 acres estate, surrounded by brooks, ponds, lake and forest. Bathing, rowing, fishing and all other sports on premises. Nearby golf and horses. 1½ hours on Erie, Bus or Route 17.

An Advertisement of
HOUSE TO RENT *or*
APARTMENT TO RENT
in a space this size, will get answers, in *The Nation.*
Rate $6.16
THE NATION - - 20 Vesey St., N. Y.
New telephone number—COrtlandt 7-3330

An ideal place for Autumn vacations. ¶WESTERN VIEW FARM, New Milford, Conn., 83 miles from Columbus Circle, elevation 1000 feet. ¶Hospitality that is unique. It brings back friends year after year. Twelfth season. ¶Riding, mountain climbing, tennis and swimming, or rest and quiet if you want it. ¶Interesting people. ¶Rates $8 a day, $49 a week. Telephone New Milford 440. EDWARD G. OHMER, Proprietor.

RESTORATION RECREATION
at THE CRYSTAL VILLA
Woodcliff Lake, N. J.
23 miles from N. Y. Fare 90c
combines country pleasures with city conveniences. Ideal for convalescents. Cater to diets. Bathing, fishing, bracing walks, wholesome Jewish-American table. Refinement. Congeniality. Phone, Park Ridge 404.

RIVERSIDE INN, Seymour, Conn.
On Lake Housatonic, boating, swimming, tennis, etc. Beautifully located among hills and woods. Only 65 miles from New York. September rates $21 per week. $3.50 per day.

FALL is the ideal time to vacation in the country. Come down to our southern colonial farmhouse to work or play. Golf, tennis, long walks in the woods, then pleasant evenings before the open fireplace. Southern hospitality, and unexcelled Virginia cooking.
Major Marshall W. MacDonald
MEDIA FARM
Charles Town, Jefferson Co., W. Va.
Rates: $15 per week and up

Autumnal Colors in the Connecticut Hills
Uncas Lodge
UNCASVILLE, CONN.
165 Acres Rustic Beauty
Private Lake
Clay Tennis Courts—Handball
Horseback—Dancing
Catering to a congenial group of 50 RATE $22.50
Phone Norwich 1858, Ring 5
Diana Berman Abe Berman

MR. and MRS. Arthur Hyatt Morse offer *English Hospitality* to limited number of discriminating adults at *Erewhon.* 100 acres. New York 49 miles Erie Main Line. Hiking, tennis, boating, swimming, saddle-horses nearby. $5 daily; $30 weekly. Telephone 13F3, Monroe,

FOR relaxation, beautiful country and pleasant companionship; phone to
The HIL-BERT HOUSE
Lake Mahopac, N. Y.
HIL FRIEDBERG, Prop. Tel. Mahopac 353

FOR delightful vacations — or week-ends. TOPSTONE FARM, in the Connecticut hills, restful, secluded. We keep our own saddle horses, and provide instruction. Swimming. Address: R.F.D. 4, Ridgefield, Conn. Phone: Ridgefield 648.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE NATION
in the
CLASSROOM

is today of outstanding value as text and discussion material because of the timeliness and pertinence of its articles, the accuracy of its facts and forecasts, its freedom from taboos, and its high standing as literature.

Of all the magazines published in America it is probably the most sensitive to the meaning and trends of its times, and the most frank and direct in its approach to national and world problems.

25c a month

per student is the cost of the magazine for classroom use, on bulk orders for ten or more copies to a single address; or

3 months.....	$ .75
4 months.....	1.00
6 months.....	1.50
8 months.....	2.00

Instructor's Copy Free

The Nation 20 Vesey St. New York

For my class of ..... students in (subject) ..... send *The Nation* for the next 17 weeks at the special class-room rate of $1 per student.

☐ $.....*enclosed.* ☐ *Bill me.*

Name .....

Address .....

In full .....

9-30-31

Finance

Needless Fears About Bonds

THE poor earnings of the railroad companies as a group this year have apparently created apprehension in the minds of many investors that savings banks and insurance companies will soon be obliged to throw on the market large amounts of railroad bonds which have lost their "legal" status. It is surprising that Wall Street, which ought to be well posted about its own merchandise, has done so little to reassure the public on this point, but misconceptions as to what the law specifies seem to be rather widely held in that district, as elsewhere. The simple fact is that neither the New York savings-bank law nor the insurance law requires the sale of a bond which has lost its eligibility. Disposition of such bonds is left to the discretion of the State's supervising authorities.

Misunderstanding regarding the position of these bonds seems to have arisen from a not too careful reading of the law governing savings-bank investments. Savings banks may invest in the bonds of railroad corporations whose net earnings "in each year for at least five of the six fiscal years, and in the last fiscal year next preceding such investment" have amounted to not less than one and one-half times the railroad corporation's fixed charges. A compilation was recently circulated in Wall Street showing that, if results for the first half of this year be applied to the whole period, twenty-four railroads will earn the amount needed to make their bonds eligible, and forty-nine will not. Savings banks in New York have about 14 per cent of their resources invested in railroad securities.

In the case of insurance companies, there is no requirement in New York that net earnings shall bear a stated ratio to fixed charges. At the end of last year the life-insurance companies of the United States owned approximately $2,900,000,000 of railroad bonds, about 17 per cent of their total investments.

To require the sale forthwith of bonds which are no longer eligible for purchase, regardless of the loss entailed, might defeat the very purpose for which the strict investment limitations were created—namely, the security of depositors and policy holders. A commercial bank's reserve is set up to enforce prudent management and to be called into use in emergencies, and a similar principle applies to the investments of savings banks and life-insurance companies. Otherwise, a variation of a few dollars in a railroad company's earnings might enforce costly liquidation on an already demoralized bond market—and the bonds thus thrown over might again be eligible after the lapse of a year. Commenting on the possible loss of eligibility of certain railroad bonds, the National City Bank remarks in a recent bulletin that "it is unlikely that the savings banks would be either required or inclined to sell them out at a sacrifice."

Even without such sales the position is not altogether comfortable, for the striking of railroad bonds from the "legal" list deprives them of the support they might overwise derive from the bank and insurance-company purchasers. Moreover, a great market for new railroad issues is closed until the companies affected better their position, either through normal business recovery or increased freight rates. Individual owners of these securities, however, have little reason to fear a flood of legally required institutional selling. Indeed, the forcing down of prices of "legals" by unwarranted forebodings, regardless of intrinsic safety, may reveal one answer to the question which many investors must be asking: What security shall I put my surplus money into? A competent investment adviser should, of course, be consulted before making a purchase.

S. PALMER HARMAN

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED